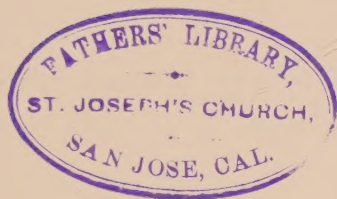


Admodum Rev.^{do} W. Congiato S. J.
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Jan 8. 1881



A

HISTORY OF RELIGION.

LONDON : BURNS AND OATES.

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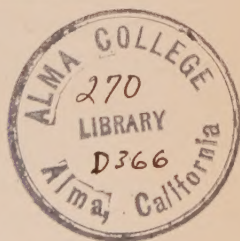
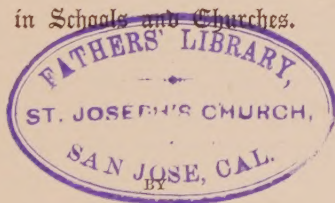
HISTORY OF RELIGION;

OR,

THE EVIDENCES FOR THE DIVINITY OF THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION AS FURNISHED
BY ITS HISTORY

FROM THE CREATION OF THE WORLD TO OUR OWN TIMES.

Designed as a Help to Catechetical Instruction
in Schools and Churches.




JOSEPH DEHARBE,

PRIEST OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS.

LONDON: BURNS AND OATES.

1881.

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PREFACE.

ON THE USE OF THIS HISTORY OF RELIGION.

IF catechists have found the first four volumes of our "Handbook" useful for giving instructions in Christian doctrine, the present work may also prove a help, in extending and explaining that abridgment of religious history, which forms the historical basis of both the Longer and the Shorter Catechisms. Both these Catechisms comprise two divisions. The first of these concerns itself with "the divinity of our religion"—it traces its history from the beginning of the world to the present time; treats of its age, its Founder, its spread, its continuance, its inherent graces and fruits, &c.; while in the second we are told what it is that this divine religion teaches—namely, that the end of our creation is, that we should serve God and arrive at eternal blessedness; that for this end, we must believe all things that God has revealed; we must keep all the commandments which God has given us either Himself or through His Church; and since we cannot do these things without grace, we must make use of those means of grace which God has appointed. Although in most editions of our Catechism the historical sketch is placed before the religious teaching, it will in the "Handbook" be dealt with after it, for the simple reason that with children, the religious would necessarily precede the historical instruction. The study and comprehension of the "History of Religion," with its appendices, would be too difficult a task for beginners, and would be best adapted for the last

year at school, or to form part of the instructions for first communion. In order however, that younger children may not be without that knowledge of the Bible so necessary for the due comprehension of their religion and its teaching, a few questions from Scripture history relating to the subject in hand have been interspersed among the instructions upon Christian doctrine. After they have been instructed in the Catechism, this abridged "*History of Religion*," with its appendices, should be taught and explained to children before they leave the elementary school, or else afterwards, where the laudable custom prevails of their continuing for some years to attend the religious instructions.

Who does not know the dangers of faith to which young people are exposed in an age like our own, in which men do not scruple, both in speech and writing, to stigmatise our holy religion as a human invention which has already outlived its day, and which must be replaced by a better and more modern system? How necessary it is, therefore, that children as they grow up should be protected from the baneful influence of infidelity, and be convinced by clear and precise demonstration of the truth and divinity of the Christian faith! Such demonstration is, above all, furnished to us by history. This has been excellently set forth by our Holy Father, Pius IX., in his Encyclical of 1846. "How many," he says, "how wonderful, and how clear, are the proofs by which men may most certainly convince themselves that the religion of Christ is a divine religion, and that there is nothing more certain, more secure, more holy, or based on firmer grounds than our faith! This our faith, supported as it is on the birth, life, death, and resurrection, of its Divine Founder and Perfecter, Jesus Christ; sealed by His wisdom, miracles, and prophecies; illuminated by the light of heavenly doctrine, and richly endowed with divine treasures, is placed before us in its brightest splendour by the predictions of its prophets, the greatness of its miracles, the fortitude of its martyrs, and the holiness of its saints;—announcing Christ's saving laws, ever drawing fresh strength

from the fiercest persecution, traversing the whole earth by water and land. From the rising to the setting of the sun we see this faith, alone and unaided, bearing the standard of the Cross throughout the world, vanquishing the deceits of idolatry, dispersing the clouds of error, triumphing over all enemies, and enlightening with divine knowledge and subjecting to the sweet yoke of Christ, all nations, tribes, and peoples, however degraded; and, however diverse from one another may be their dispositions, customs, and laws, proclaiming to all the same message of peace and joy. In all this, the light of divine power and wisdom shines so clearly forth that each man's reason may perceive without difficulty that the Christian faith can only be the work of God." Why, we would ask, are arguments so evident and striking to be withheld from our young people, exposed as they are in city and country to so many temptations? What could be more likely than the relation of facts such as these, to fill, on the one hand, their hearts with gratitude to God and reverence and love towards the Church, and, on the other, to engage their attention and make religious instruction attractive to them?

Children in schools are indeed early instructed in Scripture history. This, however, is not sufficient. Scripture history shows us the Church in her types and her foundation, but not in her continuance, her struggles, and her victories; nor does it show us the blessings which in the course of centuries she so abundantly pours forth upon the earth. And it is in these things that her divinity is most powerfully exhibited. St. Augustine says that the whole history of religion, from its origin at the creation of the world down to the existing Church of the day, should be briefly related and explained, to the ignorant who are to be instructed in Christian doctrine.¹ And why should not such

¹ De Catechizandis Rudibus, n. 10. Inde jam exordienda narratio est, ab eo, quod fecit Deus omnia bona valde (Gen. i.) et perducenda ut diximus, usque ad præsens tempora Eccles.æ.

instruction be equally to the purpose in our own time? Under the old law, God, through Moses, repeatedly enjoined on the Jews, as a command, that parents should relate to their children the wonders He had wrought.¹ Can we call the miracles which God has done for His Church less great? Do not these proofs of His power and goodness deserve indeed in yet greater measure, our attention and gratitude? How little do young people ever hear of the glorious deeds recorded in the history of the Church, whilst from hurtful reading, or from intercourse with heretics and unbelievers, they learn so much that is calculated to weaken or destroy their veneration and love for her! How untiring are the efforts of the enemies of religion in every possible way to distort and garble the Church's history, and to handle vexed questions in such a manner as to bring our holy faith into contempt!

While not denying, however, that Scripture history is a most useful and edifying study for children in elementary schools, we must not forget that no child possesses ripeness of judgment, sufficient to enable him to see, that the whole of the Old Testament bears reference to Christ and His Church, and that there has ever been but one and the same true religion, which has been established by God, and whose foundation is Christ Jesus. But there can be no question that through this view of the Old Testament history, the teachings of revelation obtain an immense support, and a blow is struck at the very root of Rationalism. It is the part of the catechist therefore, when children have mastered the literal sense of Scripture, to explain to them its higher and mystical meanings, and to place before them the Old Testament in its connection with the New. It is thus, as we shall show hereafter, that the holy fathers of the Church have ever done, and it is in this manner, that, according to the opinion of St. Augustine, the Holy Scriptures should be explained to the unlearned; for they were written in order

¹ Exod. xii. 26; Deut. iv. 9, vi. 21.

that we might see prefigured in them Christ and His Church.¹ "He to whom Christ reveals Himself in the Scriptures, possesses the key by which to understand them; but let him, on the contrary, know that he understands not Scripture rightly, if he does not there recognise Christ."²

In the following work we have not laid equal stress upon all points in the history of religion; and in this we have followed the advice of St. Augustine given in the work above quoted (a. a. O. n. 5). He there recommends catechists not to be everywhere equally diffuse, but to dwell chiefly on such points as are most worthy of observation and most calculated to excite interest. These must be completely explained and presented to the mind in all their bearings. All else is to be treated merely as forming a background to the more salient points, and dismissed quickly in a few words. Weariness to the listeners is thus avoided, and the memory is aided by variety. The holy doctor illustrates his meaning by giving a short history of religion from the creation of the world to his own times, and concludes by saying: "If this appear to thee too long, thou mayest shorten it; but thou must ever bear in mind that which is for the good of thy hearers, that which is needful for them, and for what reason in truth they are come together." It is by these words that we have been guided in the carrying out of the present work. Brevity being on the one hand desirable, such matter has been omitted as might be otherwise learnt from the Scripture studies pursued in schools, or which had been already sufficiently treated of in the first four volumes of the "Handbook;" whilst, on the other hand, it has been our endeavour to give to the work that completeness and scope which should render it serviceable for the instruction, not of children merely, but of

¹ Loc. cit. n. 6. "Neque enim ob aliud ante adventum Domini scripta sunt omnia, quæ in sanctis scripturis legimus, insi ut illius celebraretur *vel commendaretur* adventus et futura præsignaretur Ecclesia" (Migné's edition).

² Enar. in Ps. xevi. n. 2. "Cum homini fuerit in verbis (scripturarum) Christus revelatus, intelligat se intellexisse; antequam autem perveniat ad Christum intellectum, non se præsumat intellexisse."

men and women also. The use and excellence of religious instruction for adults, both in town and country, is too evident to be called in question ; and in our judgment nothing can be better calculated to promote their interest in such instruction, than the narrating and explaining to them the history of religion, concerning which the greater number of Christians have at most but a very superficial knowledge. We do not in this book offer any new historical discoveries. Our object has simply been to offer a popular apology for Christianity, having history as its foundation. To this end, we have endeavoured to choose from the whole course of religious history, extending from the creation of the world to our own time, such facts as, whether familiar or not, seemed most fitted for our purpose, to arrange them in accordance with the abridged history appended to our Catechism ; and by clearly setting forth and explaining such facts, to refute the wholesale falsehoods, the misrepresentations, and the objections, of the enemies of the faith.

NOTE.—As this fifth volume forms a continuation of the second and third editions as well as of the first, references are given in the text to all three editions. The volume referred to is indicated by Roman, and the page by Arabic, numerals. Of these letters the first number given refers to the paging of the first edition, and the second, after the word “or,” to the second and third editions ; when but one number is given, it refers to all three editions.

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INTRODUCTION.

IN all ages and in all places we find amongst men the belief in, and reverence for, a Supreme Being; in other words—religion. In the works of the heathen philosopher Plutarch, we find the following celebrated passage:—"If," he says, "thou wanderest through the earth thou mayest well find cities without walls, without kings, without palaces, without money, and without science; but none has ever yet found, nor ever will find, a people without the knowledge of a God, without prayers, without vows, and without religious ceremonies and sacrifices whereby to obtain good things or to avert evils. Nay, I believe that it would be easier for a city to be built without foundations, than for a community to be organised or to continue to exist, after the belief in a Divine Power had been done away." The cause of this phenomenon is inherent in man's nature. Religion is to him an indispensable need. Without religion, as the same heathen writer tells us, man sinks to the level of the brutes. "When once all notions of religion are extinguished, he wants nothing but the lion's claws and the wolf's teeth to convert him into a cruel monster" (a. a. O. 30). Without religion the existence and well-being of the State and family are not even conceivable. What chance would there be, were its influence removed, of peace and concord, or of respect for laws or rulers? And, even were religion less necessary as the groundwork of social life, yet the irradicable feeling of dependence on a higher power, ever to be found in the human heart, fostered as it is by the contemplation

of the visible universe, would lead man to call for help in danger and trouble, on an overruling Providence, and to seek to gain its protection by the payment of religious honours. It is because it has its root in man's heart, and in the constitution of human nature itself, that religion has always existed upon earth. But though everywhere and in all places, wherever men are to be found, we meet with traces of religion, yet, in the various forms in which we find it presented to us, we encounter wide differences both as to precept and practice, some being in these respects contradictory to others. Which then, among so many, is that one religion, true and pleasing to God, which can alone ensure our temporal and eternal welfare? The answer to this all-important question is not difficult to find. God Himself has revealed the way in which He will be worshipped by man. He Himself has given him a religion, and enjoined on him its faithful observance. This fact is undeniable, and one to which we cannot shut our eyes. History from the beginning of the world, throughout all ages, down to our own time, bears witness to it; and it is the methodical setting forth of the progress of this divine revelation which runs through all centuries, and is vouched for by records the oldest and most authentic, that constitutes the history of religion. This history of religion then, is nothing else than the history of that revelation given by God for the salvation of mankind, made known before Christ, perfected in Christ, and since preserved to us in its full purity. The subject-matter of this history is furnished by those events, institutions, and ordinances, those battles and victories, those graces and benefits, which are connected with God's revelation to man. If, then, the Christian religion, as its history bears witness, is that religion which has been founded by God for our salvation, it must then be also of necessity, that divine guide which all who desire eternal happiness are bound to embrace and hold fast.

From this we see that the history of religion is beyond comparison more important and instructive than any other his-

tory, and that its zealous and attentive study is a duty incumbent upon all.

We firmly believe our faith to be divine; we have been long since instructed to a certain extent in its history, and we know that its Founder and Preserver is God.

But a wider knowledge of the history of religion is always of great service. Such knowledge places before us in a clearer light the divinity of the Christian faith and the futility of the objections made against it. We learn from it how we are to regard the humiliations which the Church has undergone, and how to meet those historical misrepresentations made by unbelievers, either out of malice or ignorance. The more we contemplate the wonderful victories of the Church over her enemies, and the blessings which she is continually shedding abroad among all nations, the deeper will become our reverence and love towards her. Wide, and indeed unlimited, as is the scope of a "History of Religion," we hope that that small portion to which in the present volume we have been obliged to confine ourselves, may yet prove a stimulus to our readers to increase their knowledge by more extended labours in the same field, and thus gain for themselves a larger share of the advantages to be derived from the study of this subject.

HISTORY OF THE PERIOD BEFORE CHRIST.

I.

FROM ADAM TO MOSES.

As the origin of religion is coeval with that of the human race, so the history of religion begins with the creation of Adam, the first man.

The first epoch of its history extends from the first Adam to the second Adam, our Lord Jesus Christ. This epoch is further divided into two periods—the first comprising the duration of the natural law, from Adam to Moses ; the second that of the written law, from Moses to Christ.

This distinction is made because God, who in the beginning imprinted the natural moral law upon the heart of man, gave it, first, in later times to Moses, inscribed upon tables of stone.

SECTION I.

CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN—NATURAL RELIGION—ORIGINAL
RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE FIRST MAN AND WOMAN—SUPERNATURAL
RELIGION.

“In the beginning God created heaven and earth. He said, ‘Let there be,’ and all things were. The whole world, sun, moon, and stars, *green* herbs, trees, and beasts, God created in six days, and, lastly, in His own image and likeness He made man.”¹

God alone is from eternity. All things else have a beginning, and exist through Him. The universe is the work of His

¹ The lines thus enclosed between commas are taken from the text of the “Abridged History of Religion,” which accompanies the “Catechism of Religious Doctrine,” and is meant to be explained by the Catechists.

power. God called out of nothing, so Holy Scripture tells us, the dark and shapeless elements which compose it. "The earth was void and empty, and darkness was upon the face of the deep" (Gen. i. 2). The manifold developments indeed of this primary matter in its special combinations, its shaping into the harmonious and beautiful world around us, in which we see reflected as in a mirror the Divine perfections—these God did not see fit to bring all at once into being. It seemed good rather to His eternal wisdom to perfect the work of creation in six successive days or periods. At His word, by the power, that is to say, of His Almighty Will, light was created on the first day; the firmament, or vault of heaven, on the second; on the third, the sea and the dry land, with its varied covering of trees and plants. On the fourth day the sun, moon, and stars shone in heaven; on the fifth, the sea was filled with fishes, and the air with birds. The land animals were brought forth on the sixth; and on the seventh, and last, the king of the visible world, man, came forth from the hand of his Creator. "God created man in His own image; male and female He created them" (Gen. i. 27). (See further "On the Creation of the World and of Man," vol. i. p. 319, or vol. ii. p. 1.)

Thus man does not derive his existence from himself, but from God, who formed his body of clay, and animated it with an immortal soul, in which, in a special manner, the image of the divine beauty is reflected. To Him, the Most High Lord, the Creator of heaven and earth, man owes reverent adoration, willing obedience, and grateful love. Adoration, as to a Being the highest and most perfect, to whose greatness and majesty all creation bears witness; obedience, as to the universal Lord to whom he belongs, as does the vessel to the potter who formed it; love and gratitude, as to his most loving Father and greatest Benefactor, from whom, as from an inexhaustible fountain, he has received all that he has; his happiness, his well-being, and everything good that he can hope for, either in time or eternity. It is in this heartfelt reverence and submission, this love and thankfulness, joined to their practical exercise, that "natural religion" consists. The reason it is called "natural" religion is, because God's nature and man's nature together form the foundation upon which the whole structure of religion is based; in other words, it owes its origin to

the essential and unchangeable relationship of man to God. Who, then, can call in question the strict right which God has to the homage, love, and submission of all creatures, who, endowed with reason and freewill, are able to render it? Or who will say that, in His infinite holiness and justice He is not free to proclaim this right, that so He may compel His creatures to the fulfilment of this duty? (See vol. i. pp. 15, 16.) Should impiety revolt against Him, and refuse the obedience and love which are His due, still the obligation exists; and man can no more cancel it, than he can change God's nature and his own, or the position of God as Lord and Creator, or his own as subject and creature. Thus it follows, that religion has its origin in God Himself; that the obligation of practising it, existed simultaneously with the creation of man, and that this obligation has always been in force, and can never cease to be so. Nothing, therefore, is more absurd than the idea, that religion is but a mere human invention, which is indebted for the forms it may have taken, to the will of such chiefs as have needed its influence, in order to hold in check a rude and credulous people. Religion, before all things, is a necessity of humanity, without which man sinks to the level of brutes. It is not this necessity, however, which has caused religion; but it is by reason of this necessity, that those nations, who have fallen from the worship of the true God, yet honour some divinity by religious practices. Because this natural religion is capable of being made evident to human reason without any special revelation from God, it is therefore called "rational religion." Although the foundation of all religion, it is yet insufficient of itself, without the aid of supernatural or revealed religion, of which we shall next speak, to lead man to eternal blessedness.

"The first created of mankind were Adam and Eve. They were just and holy; the beloved of God. They lived happily in a beautiful garden called Paradise; and neither they nor their children needed ever to have died."

God is indeed the Father of all men, for He has created all and cares for all. But He is in a more special manner the Father of those, whom He has by particular grace and favour adopted for His own, in order that they may become co-heirs of the kingdom of heaven, with His eternal and only-begotten Son. It is therefore to such as these that the Apostle St. John speaks the consoling words, "Behold what manner of charity the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called, and should be, the sons of God" (1 John iii. 1). This

priceless gift of sonship with God, which we first received in holy baptism, was granted to our first parents at their creation, to be by them transmitted to their descendants, until the end of time. Adam and Eve were therefore spiritually ennobled and raised to a high state of grace. Being children of God, they were also His friends and favourites. Not only were they free from all stain of sin, but they were just and holy, adorned with every virtue, and plentifully endowed with the gifts of the Holy Ghost. Not content with giving them rank and title as His children, God glorified and ennobled their souls also, with supernatural holiness and justice, clothed them with sanctifying grace, and so imparted to them a share in the holiness of the divine nature. This holiness is called "supernatural," because it is a holiness to which man, by the exercise of his natural powers, never could attain, however much he might labour to do so. This supernatural holiness was a pledge also to its possessors, of a supernatural happiness hereafter, consisting in the vision of God in His eternal majesty and glory; in knowing and loving Him, not merely as imaged in His works, but in His own reality and essence, even as He knows and loves Himself.

But, unlike us, they had no need, in order to reach this happiness, of waging a never-ceasing battle with the desires of their lower nature. With them the flesh was in perfect subjection to the spirit. They had no need to tread the rough and toilsome road over which we must pass; there was no need that they should ever taste of death; painlessly, without separation of soul and body, they would have passed, after a happy sojourn in the earthly Paradise, to the endless joys of heaven.¹

Such, then, was the high destiny to which from the beginning man was called by God's wisdom; such the dignity to which he was raised by God's fatherly love; and such the priceless gifts of grace

¹ This question is treated of at greater length vol. ii. p. 19. To seek for proofs of what is here stated in the Pentateuch alone, would be useless. It is sufficiently shown by the history of the Church. (See condemned propositions of Baiæ, 21, 23, 24, &c.)

with which he was enriched by God's boundless liberality. We can then well see that man was thus placed in a special relationship to God; that he was joined to God by an intimate union and kinship, so that his soul, penetrated and enlightened by abiding supernatural grace, became possessed, not only of a higher sanctity and closer likeness to God, but of a new and supernatural strength and vitality.

If man, as the creature of God, owed to Him, as his Creator and Sovereign Lord, such reverence, love, and obedience as is due from a subject and vassal; how much more did he not, being as he was God's child by adoption and grace, owe to Him the reverence, love, and obedience of a son? If, as a rational creature, he was bound to make good use of his natural faculties, how much more was he bound to turn to good account those far higher supernatural powers which he had received,—to correspond faithfully with grace, to cherish and exercise the virtues which the Holy Spirit had implanted in his heart, to fulfil, that is to say, all the duties of "*supernatural*" as well as of *natural* religion? Supernatural religion may be properly defined as that religion which is founded, not merely on man's *natural* relationship to God as his Creator, but on his *supernatural* relationship to God as his Father by adoption. It thus has its root, not in nature only, but in the grace of God.

It is impossible, that without a knowledge of supernatural religion, man should fulfil, or even strive to fulfil, its obligations. For the endeavour to attain an end, necessarily implies a knowledge of the end itself. And this knowledge, the light of natural reason is insufficient to impart; what is supernatural belonging, as the word implies, to a higher order of things, beyond the reach, and even beyond the conception, of human reason. How could man, indeed, have guessed unaided, that Almighty God should have adopted him for His child, and have destined him from all eternity to be co-heir with His only-begotten Son of His heavenly kingdom? This knowledge must of necessity come directly from God. God must Himself reveal the decrees of His infinite love, and make known to man his high calling, and the means to be employed

for its fulfilment. It is certain that God raised man in the beginning to a high state of grace, and equally so that the first revelation, which, to distinguish it from the later ones, we call "primitive revelation" (*Uroffenbarung*), was given to him in Paradise. Of this we have proof in the words of the wise Sirach concerning our first parents. "He filled them with the knowledge of understanding. He created in them the science of the spirit; he filled their heart with wisdom. Moreover he gave them . . . the law of life for an inheritance; and He showed them His justice and judgments." From the narrative of Moses, it appears that God held converse with our first parents in Paradise, as a father with his children; that He spoke with them, taught them, and enlightened them. It was thus by divine revelation only that they arrived at a knowledge of supernatural religion; and it is this supernatural religion, which, in order to distinguish it from the religion of reason, we call "revealed" religion. This religion was necessary for our first parents, and is equally so for all men without exception; for (setting aside other reasons) all Adam's descendants have received from God the same supernatural vocation as himself, in that all are called to be God's children, to know God as their Heavenly Father by the supernatural light of faith, to love and serve Him by the aid of supernatural grace, and to behold and possess Him at last in the eternal happiness of heaven.

We need not, however, be surprised that the free-thinkers, as they are called, of our own day should not see the necessity of a divine revelation. A foolish arrogance hinders their having even so much as a conception, far less any knowledge, of the sublime dignity, for which man, by God's infinite love and mercy, is destined. They would consider it as an insult to human reason to acknowledge any need on its part of a divine revelation. If they saw more clearly, however, and if they understood better the teaching of Christianity, they would perceive that in this very need, lies the proof of the special greatness and divine nobility of man's nature.

SECTION II.

THE FALL—PROMISE OF THE SAVIOUR—GERM OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

“God commanded Adam and Eve that they should not eat of the fruit of the tree, which stood in the midst of the garden, lest they should die. But the serpent said to them, ‘If you eat of it, you shall be as gods.’ Adam and Eve believed the serpent, and transgressed God’s commandment. Then the punishment came upon them and all their children. They were driven forth from Paradise, condemned to toil and death, and to perpetual banishment from the presence of God.”

Nor man alone, but countless hosts also of heavenly spirits, had been created by God in His own image. Whether they were brought into being before the visible world, or simultaneously with it during the six days of creation, we have no certain knowledge. These, too, were the children of God; holy, happy, adorned with grace, gifted with high privileges, and destined to the enjoyment of everlasting blessedness and the vision of God. But this unimaginable happiness was with them, as well as with man, to be the reward of voluntary perseverance in good. Great numbers of these spirits failed in the trial. They arrogantly exalted themselves against the Most High, and were cast by Him into the abyss of torment. (See vol. i. p. 370.) Filled with anger against God, and impelled by envious hate towards the human race, the evil spirit sought to seduce man into disobedience to the Divine Majesty, and thus to involve him, together with himself, in eternal ruin.

This trial God permitted; for through it our first parents would have an opportunity of fulfilling the religious duties binding on them, by exercising, through the aid of divine grace, the virtues of faith, love, and submission to the will of God. The command which God had imposed on them in order to prove their obedience, not to eat of one special tree in the garden, “the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,” was easy to observe. If filial love had not been strong enough to

prevent its transgression, servile fear might have sufficed to do so.

For, "In what day soever thou shalt eat of it, thou shalt die the death," thus had run the threat of Divine vengeance. How the lying spirit succeeded in his evil purpose, we know ; under the form of a serpent, he spoke to the woman and asked her why God had forbidden them to eat of all the trees of the garden. Eve listened imprudently to the tempter. He represented to her that the enjoyment of the forbidden fruit would by no means bring death, but that rather they who partook of it should become like God. The woman looked with pleasure at the fruit, then took and ate of it, and gave it to the man to eat also. (See vol. ii. p. 28.) And now their eyes were opened. In shame and confusion at their nakedness, which in their angelical innocence they had not noticed before, they sought to hide themselves from the eye of the All-seeing. But the Lord God called Adam, and pronounced their just sentence upon the offenders. The serpent was cursed ; the woman was condemned to the pains of childbirth, and made subject to the dominion of man ; and Adam, for whom from henceforth the ground was to bring forth thorns and thistles, was sentenced to eat bread in the sweat of his brow, till he should return to the earth, whence he came. "For dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." And then they were driven forth from the earthly Paradise, the abode of holy peace and untroubled joy.

The ruin brought upon our parents by this their first sin, was not limited to themselves, but extended to all their offspring. For in Adam, as the head and father of the human race, man's nature was, as we know, adorned and enriched with supernatural holiness, and with many excellent gifts of God's grace. In Him, it was raised to a participation in the Divine nature, and thus rendered noble and glorious. And had he not sinned, his supernatural, as well as his natural, gifts would have been transmitted to his descendants. Sin, however, has stripped human nature of all holiness, taken from it its supernatural graces, degraded it and stained it, and

rendered it an object of displeasure to God. Nature alone, deprived of grace—nay, more, in a condition of actual disgrace—could not fail to involve the children of Adam in sin and misery. Thus it is that we are all conceived and born in a state of sin and degeneracy. Not only are our natural faculties weakened, our concupiscence aroused, our reason darkened, our freewill perverted to evil, and our bodies subjected to pain and death; but—and this is the worst consequence of the original transgression—human nature, thus deprived of grace, is rendered incapable of fulfilling its supernatural end; that is to say, of attaining to everlasting blessedness in the vision of God. (Further developed and proved in vol. ii. pp. 31–71.)

“Yet God took pity on them, and promised them a Saviour, who, if they did penance, should reconcile them with Him once more, and make them again partakers of eternal blessedness (Gen. iii. 15).”

Man, instead of obeying the Lord of heaven and earth, had done the devil's will; and, like that proud spirit, had striven vaingloriously to make himself like unto God. Thus, therefore, he had deserved to share in the eternal ruin of the rebel angels, and it was by the divine mercy alone that this punishment did not at once overtake him. But not thus only,—in not, that is, consigning him at once to eternal death, did God manifest His mercy towards man—He did far more. Sinful and degraded as the human race had now become, He poured forth upon it superabundantly the treasures of His great compassion. Man had misused and forfeited God's gifts; if his Heavenly Father had never restored him to the dignity of sonship, but on his sincere repentance, had received him again into favour as a subject only, with the promise that, if by the help of divine grace he rendered faithful service, he should after this life be clothed anew with immortality, and allowed again to dwell in a paradise like that from which he had been cast forth,—would not even this have been great mercy and goodness?

But far greater was the grace and favour which God

rich in compassion, had actually in store for the fallen human race. Man was to be again raised, as before his sin, to the honour of divine sonship with all its privileges, and not an earthly paradise, but a heavenly kingdom of indescribable blessedness, was destined to be his abode for all eternity. For his salvation, the only-begotten Son of God was to descend from the throne of His glory upon the sin-cursed earth; was to take upon Himself all the sorrows and sufferings of the children of Adam, and teach them by word and example how these, through patient endurance, would become a cause of abundant merit and increase of heavenly glory. And, that due satisfaction should be made to God, and the faithless, sinful race be saved from the doom they had deserved, He, the Most Holy, would Himself die the death of a malefactor; and then, in order that those whom He had redeemed might enjoy in the fullest measure the riches of His grace, on His departure from the earth, He was to send down upon them the Holy Spirit, who would remain with them until the end of time, to enlighten, sanctify, comfort, and strengthen them, and enrich them with all heavenly blessings.

“‘For His exceeding charity wherewith He loved us’ (Eph. ii. 4). God has thus willed it from all eternity. In Jesus Christ our Divine Redeemer we shall all, ‘who were dead in sin, be quickened again,’ and be blessed with the fulness of grace and heavenly gifts. Even in the sentence of punishment itself, the hope of a future Redeemer was allowed to dawn. God said to the serpent, ‘I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her Seed; she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel’ (Gen. iii. 15).”

In these words are contained the promise of ultimate triumph over the power of Satan; and of that victory which, in spite of the evil machinations of the serpent, was to be gained by the Son of the woman, over sin, death, and hell. Adam comprehended with joy the divine promise, and gave to his wife, who had hitherto been called woman or *female man*, the significant name of *Eve*, “*the mother of the living*.” And so indeed she is, not only as to this natural life, which her children receive through her, but also in a higher sense

with regard to eternal life. For as it was woman who brought eternal death upon the human race, so it was woman too who brought eternal life; in so much that of one, the most blessed among all women, Jesus, the author of eternal life, was born according to the flesh.

The Fathers unanimously teach that Eve, the "mother of the living," is to be regarded as a type of Mary, the ever Blessed Mother of God; and St. Paul tells us that Adam, the father of all men according to the flesh, is in like manner a type of the second Adam, Jesus Christ, the father of all men according to the Spirit (Rom. v. 14).

In Paradise, fallen man first received the glad tidings of salvation, and it was in Paradise, that the first dawn of Christianity beamed upon him. The greater He was, by whom the world was to be loosed from the bands of sin, so much the longer beforehand was it fitting that He should be prophesied and waited for; with so much the greater fervency that He should be longed for and invoked. Man, in his folly, had renounced God. The lapse of centuries was needed, to prove to him whither that path led which he had chosen, and into what depths of misery his pride had plunged him—to force him to seek help from God, to call with longing on a Saviour, to prize God's mercy when accorded to him, and to recognise in the restoration of a perishing world the most wonderful miracle of divine power. (See vol. ii. pp. 129, 139, or 128, 137.)

Four thousand years were to pass away before the promised Redeemer would appear on earth. But human nature was not, meanwhile, left without help, to perish everlastingly; God, to whom a thousand years are as one day, beheld "the Lamb who taketh away the sins of the world" slain from the beginning. Thousands of years before the sacrifice was consummated, He looked with infinite complacency upon the offering for sin; and in view of its merits He extended to all men, before the coming of our Lord, the means and graces necessary for eternal salvation, and received all who used and faithfully corresponded with them into the supernatural fellowship of His children. (Vol. ii. p. 79 or 80.) Thus Jesus Christ is the salvation of the whole world. He is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever" (Heb. xiii. 8); the fountain of supernatural life, flowing unceasingly through time and eternity.

Christianity, then, is as old as the world itself. It is the tree of life which was planted by the hand of God in Paradise, and which

bore in the fulness of time its fairest and noblest flower, the God-Man Jesus Christ.

And as Christ is the Saviour of all ages, so the faith of all ages is a faith in Him. Without this faith there is no union with Him, and therefore no life or salvation.¹ Christians believe in a Saviour already come; just men before Christ believed in a Saviour who was coming.

There is, too, but one religion which God has revealed, and that is the Christian religion.²

The words of the Prince of the Apostles to the Jewish High Priest are true for all time. "There is no other name under heaven given to men whereby we must be saved," than that of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (Acts iv. 12).

SECTION III.

ORIGIN AND SIGNIFICATION OF SACRIFICE—CAIN AND ABEL.

"Cain and Abel, the sons of our first parents, offered sacrifice to the Most High. God accepted that of the pious Abel, whilst that of the unjust Cain He rejected. In anger at this Cain slew his brother, and became thenceforth cursed, and a fugitive on the earth."

SACRIFICE is the most perfect form of exterior and interior offering to Almighty God; and hence it is the highest act of divine worship or religion. Most especially, therefore, is it the summit and centre of Christianity. God's covenant with man, annulled by sin, was re-established, and heaven reconciled with earth, through the sacrifice of Calvary; and the supreme

¹ Concerning the heathen, who had no knowledge of revelation, St. Thomas says (2, 2, q. 2, a. 7, ad 3), "*Si qui tamen salvati fuerunt, quibus revelatio non est facta, non fuerunt salvati absque fide mediatoris, quia et si non habuerunt explicitam habuerunt tamen fidem implicitam in divina providentia, credentes Deum esse liberatorem hominum secundum modos sibi placitos.*" And (see Exposition in Ep. ad Heb. xi. 1, 2), "*Gentiles qui fuerunt salvati, sufficiebat eis quod crederent, Deum esse remuneratorem, quæ remuneratio non fit nisi per Christum. Unde, implicitè credebant in mediatorem.*" (See vol. i. p. 160.)

² The following words of St. Augustine are remarkable (Retract., i. 1, c. 12, n. 3):—"What is now called the Christian religion has existed from the creation of the human race, but it was only when Christ appeared in the flesh that men first gave the name of Christianity to the true religion which was already in being."

end of Christianity is to impart to all men the blessed fruits of this saving holocaust. It is for this that the holy sacrifice is continually, in an unbloody manner, celebrated and offered. The worship of the Church everywhere is founded upon sacrifice, and hence streams of grace and blessing flow forth upon all Christians.

The very essence of Christianity is sacrifice; and Christianity, too, as we have seen, is as old as the world. We should thus naturally be led to infer that the institution of sacrifice had not been wanting from the earliest times. And, indeed, the Sacred Scriptures prove that the sons first born to Adam and Eve did offer sacrifices to God. Cain, who was a husbandman, offered of the fruits of the earth to the Lord; whilst Abel, who was a shepherd, offered the first and best of his flocks. We cannot doubt that the custom so widespread among all peoples, of offering sacrifice to the Supreme Being, had its rise in the will of God. How else could all nations have acquired the idea of sacrifice, or have become possessed of the certainty that God regards with special favour, the offerings of lambs and bullocks upon His altars, or the burning of the fruits of the earth in His honour? Had man merely felt himself impelled by gratitude to offer a gift to God, how is it that it did not occur to him as more fitting, to make it by bestowing his own abundance on those in need, as Christian charity and piety still prompt men to do? But we see, from many instances in the Holy Scriptures, that this firmly-rooted and widespread conviction, did not rest merely upon an empty myth; but that God did actually accept and look with special favour, both upon the bloody and unbloody sacrifices, offered to Him with pious intentions, before the coming of our Lord.

So soon, however, as the sacrifice of the God-Man had been accomplished, all other offerings were, by God's command, abolished as worthless; thus clearly showing that they had before been acceptable to Him, only inasmuch as they had foreshadowed the most holy sacrifice of the new law, and

that it was for this end alone they had been instituted. (See vol. iv. pp. 299-301.)

Thus all the sacrifices of the just, from the beginning of the world to the hour when the spotless Lamb of God was offered on the altar of the Cross for the salvation of men, are embraced by the Christian religion.

They all witnessed to the firm belief in a coming Redeemer, and to a trustful hope of future salvation. The bloody sacrifices were a type of the bloody offering on Calvary; and the bloodless ones of its unbloody continuance and renewal in the most Holy Sacrifice of the Altar.

Abel made his offering in a spirit of piety, with firm faith in God's promises, and confidence in their fulfilment; God, therefore, looked upon it with favour, whilst He rejected the offering of Cain.

The Apostle says (Heb. xi. 4), "By faith Abel offered to God a sacrifice exceeding that of Cain, by which he obtained a testimony that he was just, God giving testimony to his gifts." What this testimony was, in what manner God made known His acceptance of Abel's sacrifice, Holy Scripture does not say. But we are told how, at a later period, God was pleased to accept the sin offerings made to Him by Aaron, Gedeon, David, Solomon, Elias, and others; and that, in token of this acceptance, He sent down fire from heaven to consume them. And it is a common and well-founded opinion that this sign might have been given to Abel. Cain, instead of looking into and amending his own faults, murmured against his brother on account of the greater favour he had received, and became enraged against him, so that his countenance fell. Then God spoke to him and said, "Why art thou angry? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou do well, shalt thou not receive? but if ill, shall not sin forthwith be present at the door? but the lust thereof shall be under thee, and thou shalt have dominion over it" (Gen. iv. 6, 7). These words show us that after the fall, God yet continued to teach and warn men, and to direct

them, by the revelation of His will, into the path of the promised salvation.

He saw Cain blinded by anger, rushing on the guilt of fratricide, and sought not merely by the internal voice of conscience, but as a father to his son, by an express warning, to turn him from the path of ruin. But the obduracy born of envy and hate frustrated God's merciful Providence. Cain craftily enticed the innocent Abel into the fields, and slew him with his own hands. Scarcely, however, was the guilty deed accomplished, when the innocent blood cried to Heaven for vengeance, and the murderer of his brother, cursed by God, was doomed to wander restlessly, a fugitive and vagabond, over the face of the earth.

This, like all the other histories recorded in Holy Scripture, furnishes to the careful reader abundant material for sound instruction. We shall always find, as we are told by St. Cæsarius of Arles (Sermon, (? Rede) 40), "That we draw comparatively but little profit from this study of the sacred histories, if we confine our attention to their literal meaning only, and pass over the symbolical meaning which is contained in them; for all such are figures and intimations of what is to come." "Indeed there is no doubt," says St. Hilarius in speaking of the 136th Psalm, "that all that our fathers did and witnessed was a foreshadowing of the future."

Not only, says St. Augustine,¹ was their speech prophetic, but their lives also. The Fathers with one accord hold the same opinion; they all agree with St. Augustine "that the Old Testament is the veil of the New, and the New the unfolding of the Old,"² and encourage us to apply our souls to discern the mysteries which lie hidden beneath these parables.

Abel, like Adam, is unanimously considered by the Fathers to be a type of our Lord.

They see in many ways the Incarnate Son of God fore-

¹ Book xxii. chap. 24, adv. Faustinus.

² De Catechiz, rudib., n. 8. In veteri testamento est occultatio novi, in novo testamento est manifestatio veteris.

shadowed in the just Abel, and in Cain the impiety and ultimate fate of the Jewish nation.

(1.) Abel received from Christ the surname of "the just" (Matt. xxiii. 35). Of the Saviour Jeremias prophesies (xxiii. 6), "And this is the name that they shall call Him, The Lord, our Just One."

(2.) Abel was a shepherd. The Lord calls Himself the Good Shepherd. The faithful He calls His sheep, and the Church His fold.

(3.) Abel and Cain both sacrificed to the Lord; Abel's sacrifice was accepted by God with favour, whilst that of Cain was rejected.

Our Lord offers Himself in sacrifice to His Heavenly Father, and this offering is accepted with infinite complacency by Almighty God, whilst the offerings of the Jews are from henceforth rejected by Him.

(4.) It was out of envy that Abel was slain by his elder brother, and from envy (Matt. xxvii. 18) the Jews, the elder brethren of Christ after the flesh, delivered Him over to death. Abel was enticed by his brother into the fields and there slain; Christ was led by the Jews out of Jerusalem and there nailed to the cross.

(5.) In punishment for the murder of his brother, God had said to Cain, "Now, therefore, cursed shalt thou be upon the face of the earth, which hath opened her mouth and received the blood of thy brother at thy hand; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be upon the earth."

The judgment which fell upon the Jews for the murder of One, who was at once their Brother and their God, and which they had themselves invoked when they cried, "His blood be upon us and on our children," was that they, the once chosen people, were rejected of God, and doomed to live scattered abroad among all nations, far from their own home; and for eighteen centuries they have indeed thus wandered to and fro, with neither priests, kings, temple, nor sacrifice.

(6.) "God set a mark on Cain, that whosoever found him should not kill him."

The Jews, separated as they are from other nations by the outward sign of circumcision, which had been imposed on them by God, continue, as though by a miracle, to exist as a distinct people; and will yet continue to do so until the end of time, notwithstanding the hatred which pursues them.

"Indeed," says St. Augustine, "it is in the highest degree wonderful, that, whilst all other nations subjugated by the Romans, adopted their worship, the Jews alone, whether under heathen or Christian kings, never lost the sign of the covenant which divides them from other men."

In Abel the Fathers see an image, not of Jesus Christ alone, but of all the just; of all those, who, believing in Jesus Christ, desire to lead a godly life, and who therefore, as St. Paul bears witness (2 Tim. iii. 12), suffer from the persecution of the wicked.

"With Cain and Abel," says St. Augustine,¹ "began the eternal separation of the human race, into the kingdom of God's children and the kingdom of the children of this world. All who strive after heavenly things, who carefully avoid sin, or, if they should fall into it, are not ashamed to confess it; the humble, the gentle, the holy, the just, the good, and pious—all these belong to the first of these two kingdoms, of which Christ is the King. The earthly-minded, on the other hand, such as prefer temporal goods before the Lord God, and seek their own things alone—these belong to the second kingdom, whose prince is the devil." The children of God, so long as they are dwelling together upon earth with the children of this world, will be exposed from them, to hostility, snares, and persecutions. This is the consequence of that enmity which was declared in Paradise between the seed of the serpent and the Seed of the woman; between the ungodly, that is to say, who are called by St. John (1st Epist. iii. 10) the children of the devil, and the just, who have for their Captain and Head, Christ, the conqueror of hell.

The cause of this implacable enmity, is that envy inspired in them by the devil, which all the wicked, like Cain, entertain towards the good; and entertain for this very reason, according to the striking remark of St. Augustine, "that good, is in itself, evil to them" (*City of God*, b. xv. chap. 5).

Wherefore, asks St. John, did Cain slay his brother? "Because his own works were wicked, and his brother's just."

"Wonder not, brethren, if the world hate you," adds the beloved disciple; if it rewards you evil for good, for it is the good itself that it hates in you.

¹ Commentary on Psalm lxi. n. 6.

The weapons with which evil wages war on good, have always been, and are to this day, the same, namely, lies and violence. It was through a lie that the serpent led our first parents to their ruin ; and it was to violence that Cain resorted, in order to rid himself of his just brother. History bears witness, that it is by means of violence and lying that the powers of darkness, with their allies, Jews, heathen, heretics, and apostates, have in every age attacked the Church of God ; and who knows whether violence and lying may not, even in our own day, be again brought to bear on the struggle. What else can be portended, by the unbridled licence of the press, the iniquitous, and almost unprecedented transactions in Italy, and the horrors but so lately perpetrated in Syria, Tonquin, and Cochin China ?

SECTION IV.

TRADITION OF DIVINE REVELATION—CORRUPTION OF MORALS— THE DELUGE, AND GOD'S COVENANT WITH NOE.

“Cain’s descendants were wicked like their father, and gradually seduced the just also, so that at last all mankind forsook God, and plunged ever deeper in sin and vice.”

THE treasure of divine revelation, which our parents had received in Paradise from the hand of the Almighty, was by them to be transmitted to their descendants, and with it also supernatural faith in the true God, and in the Redeemer whom He had promised.

The great age which men then reached was very favourable to this transmission. Adam lived nine hundred and thirty years ; fifty-six years, that is to say, after the birth of Lamech, who was eighth in descent from him, and the father of Noe. Thus almost all those who lived between the creation and the deluge were either contemporary with Adam, or else the children of those who might have been instructed by him in the divine revelation.

This revelation, Adam for his own part had faithfully guarded ; he had drawn from it the wisdom leading to penance, through which, as the Holy Ghost declares, “ he

was again freed from sin" (Wisd. x. 2), and he was doubtless most zealous in transmitting it entire to his children and children's children.

It was long preserved, together with its fruit of piety, amongst the posterity of Seth, whom, together with other sons and daughters, God had given to Adam in place of Abel. Enos, the son of Seth, was distinguished for his piety, and instituted amongst the now numerous human family the practice of worshipping God in common.

Of Henoch, a later descendant, and the grandfather of Noe, the Scripture says that "he walked with God," and that he was by Him found worthy to be taken from off the earth without having tasted death; a privilege which in later times was granted to the prophet Elias, and to him only.

Henoch is held up to us by St. Paul as an example of firm faith, by means of which he pleased God. It is of faith grounded on divine revelation that the Apostle speaks. Through this faith it was, that Henoch believed what had been revealed to Adam by the Most High, concerning our supernatural calling, the promised Redeemer, the worship of the true God, future judgment, and life eternal.

Not only did he himself believe these divine truths, but he preached them to others, and warned men, as St. Jude tells us, of the coming judgments of God. "Behold," he says, "the Lord cometh, with thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to reprove all the ungodly for all the works of their ungodliness, whereby they have done ungodly, and of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against God" (Jude 14, 15). But all were not moved by the inspired warning.

In spite of the urgent call to penance, the fearful corruption which had spread over the earth kept men's hearts turned away from God.

In the person of Cain the murderer, moral degeneracy had gained entrance into the human race. Despairing of God's mercy, he had thrown off his allegiance to the Most High,

renounced his hopes of eternal life, and striven only after earthly happiness.

"He built a city," the Scripture says, "and called it after the name of his son Henoch."

He who had laid aside all claim to a heavenly immortality, sought through an empty name to make himself immortal upon earth. Cain's children trod in the footsteps of their father. They despised God's commandments and ordinances, and prosperity and temporal happiness were all that they sought.

Polygamy, murder, sin, and vice of every kind, were the results of their impiety.

Could the children of Seth, on whom Holy Scripture bestows the honourable title of "sons of God," have resolved to forego all intercourse with the wicked, then indeed the tide of moral depravity would not have been able to burst through all bounds, and overflow and lay waste the whole earth.

But the daughters of the wicked, careless of divine grace, sought through carnal beauty alone, to attract the eyes of men. The sons of God looked upon them, suffered themselves to be ensnared, and entered into marriages with them; and thus the ruin became general. From the union of the sons of God with the daughters of this world, sprung the impious race of giants. These Holy Scripture describes as having been "mighty men, men of renown, great of stature, mighty in battle, proud, presumptuous; men who besought not God for their sins, but trusted only in their own strength" (Gen. vi. 4; Bar. iii. 26; Wisd. xiv. 6; Sir. xvi. 8).

Their memory is preserved in Greek mythology under the name of the Titans. They are represented there as being the sons of earth and heaven, and as having arrogantly uplifted themselves to dethrone their own father. Thus, fifteen hundred years after its creation, the earth was filled with wickedness. Of Noe alone it is said "that he was a just and perfect man," and "walked with God" (Gen. vi. 9). By faith, says St. Paul, he judged the world; he bore witness against it that it was deserving of punishment, because, like

him, it might have believed, and so have attained eternal life.

“Then the Lord resolved to destroy the degenerate human race through a universal deluge (about the year 2350 B.C.).¹ The waters rose fifteen cubits above the highest mountain tops. Every one perished. The just Noe alone escaped with his family in the ark, which he had built by God’s commandment. In gratitude for his safety, he raised an altar, and offered burnt sacrifices to the Lord. Then God blessed Noe and his sons, and promised him that henceforth there should ‘no more be waters of a flood to destroy all flesh’ (Gen. ix. 15).”

God might have chosen numberless other means whereby to punish the sinful race. All nature was obedient to Him as its sovereign Lord. Pestilence, earthquake, fire from heaven, ravening beasts, armed hosts,—all these, and a thousand other scourges, He might have employed, to sweep from off the earth a perishing people. Countless hosts of heavenly spirits waited on His nod, ever ready to execute the divine judgments. But it pleased the Lord, in the destruction of impiety, and the renovation of the human race through one just man, to make choice as His means, of the deluge and the ark. The holy Fathers perceive in this a mystery. In Noe they see a type of Jesus Christ, and in the ark of the Church. The Apostle, St. Peter (1st Epist. iii. 20, 21), speaks of the flood as a type of baptism. St. Augustine says, “That in considering the deluge, we should have regard to it not merely as to an event of history, but we should seek to discover its higher and more mysterious meanings, as a foreshadowing of things to come. For no part of this history is without its higher signification” (*City of God*, b. xv. chap. 27).

(1.) The name “Noe” signifies “Rest,” “Peace,” “A comforter.” Lamech gave his son this name by divine inspiration, when he said, “This same shall comfort us from the works

¹ The year 2347 B.C. is the date ordinarily assigned for the deluge. The chronology of the Old Testament, however, cannot be fixed with any certainty; but it has been thought better to give this date in round numbers, as an aid to the memory; the same applies to all the following dates.

and labours of our hands upon the earth, which the Lord hath cursed." And when the whole evil world was destroyed, Noe did indeed become the comforter, the saviour, and the father of the new generation of men. Who does not see that all this applies, in a sense far higher and wider, to Christ the Saviour of the world? He it is who delivers us from eternal death, who is our fountain of consolation in our toilsome life upon earth, and who will be hereafter the everlasting rest of His chosen ones.

(2.) Noe built the ark at God's command, for the preservation of the human race. Christ has founded the Church for the safety of His redeemed people.

(3.) Outside the ark, none could escape temporal death; so outside the Church, says St. Cyprian, none can escape eternal death.

(4.) In the ark, all kinds of beasts, clean and unclean, found refuge. The bosom of the Church is open to all nations, Jews and Gentiles.¹

(5.) No one had a right to complain who perished outside the ark. God had invited, warned, and threatened. A hundred and twenty years beforehand, the impending judgment had been foretold (Gen. vi. 3); and for a hundred years they had seen, or might have heard of, the building of the ark.²

So, too, none can excuse himself or complain who is lost outside the Church. God invites all to enter. He offers His grace to all; to this end He sends His messengers throughout the whole world; and should any without guilt of their own fail to recognise the Church, such may yet through her attain everlasting life (vol. ii. p. 578 or 579).

¹ This was also signified to St. Peter by the vessel containing clean and unclean beasts (Acts x.)

² But mankind took no heed. "They did eat and drink, they married wives and were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark; and the flood came and destroyed them all" (Luke xvii. 27). If, however, at the approach and rising of the waters there were many who entered into themselves and did penance, they might thus certainly have escaped eternal, though they suffered temporal, death (1 Pet. iii. 20).

(6.) The ark, without sail or rudder, was protected and guided through the rushing of the mighty waters, not by human skill or strength, but by divine power and wisdom alone. Thus, too, is the ark of the Church most evidently guided and protected by the power and wisdom of God, whilst the ever-rising waves of persecution threaten on all sides to overwhelm her.

(7.) An olive branch with green leaves was brought to Noe in the ark by a dove.

“That branch,” says St. Ambrose (Sup. Lucian. b. ii. n. 92), “was a symbol of the blessing of perpetual peace, promised by the Holy Ghost to the Church, amidst the troubled waters of this world.”

(8.) In order that the family so wonderfully saved in the ark might repeople the earth with a new and virtuous race, it was needful that the old sinful generation should first perish in the waters of the flood.

So, too, it is only through the descent of the old man into the waters of baptism, and his purification there from the stain of sin, that the Church can lead heavenwards a new and holy people. St. Peter, in comparing together holy baptism and the deluge, says, “Whereunto baptism, being of the like form, now saveth you also.”

(9.) The Fathers, too, who with St. Peter see in the flood a type of baptism, see likewise in the wood of which the ark was made, a type of the wood of the cross, through which we are saved from eternal death.

“For as Noe and his family,” says St. Isidore, “escaped by means of water and wood; so it is through baptism, and through that which was suffered upon the wood of the cross, that the family of Christ are saved.” And in like manner speak also St. Justin, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Leo, St. Cyril of Alexandria, and many others.

(10.) The sacrifice of Noe caused God again to look down in fatherly mercy on the waste and desolate earth, and induced Him to pour forth upon the human race the fulness of

His divine blessing, and to make an everlasting covenant of peace with man.

It is needless to say that this, in its higher sense, typifies that Sacrifice, infinitely more perfect, which Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, our Mediator, and the Author of the New Covenant, offered to His Heavenly Father for the salvation of men.

(II.) The rainbow betokens the return of sunlight after storm, and God set it in the clouds as a sign of His covenant with man.

“When I shall cover the sky with clouds,” He said, “My bow shall appear in the clouds, . . . and I shall see it, and shall remember the everlasting covenant that was made between God and every living soul of all flesh which is upon the earth” (Gen. ix. 14-16).

The special manner in which this passage of Holy Scripture is emphasised points to a mystery hidden beneath it. We may, with the majority of commentators, consider the rainbow as representing the Son of God become man. It owes its origin to the striking of the sunlight upon the drops of rain. The God-Man unites in Himself the two natures, human and divine, which are symbolised in the liturgy of the Church under the two forms of water and of the sun.

The beautiful coloured arch seems to extend itself from earth to sky, and to bind the two together. Jesus Christ, the God made man, rose gloriously from earth to heaven and united them into one kingdom.

In the rainbow appear the three primary colours, blue, red, and yellow. In the incarnation of the eternal Word, the three essential attributes of divine perfection, holiness, justice, and mercy, are most gloriously displayed.

So, too, when the wickedness of man, ever inclined as he is to evil, excites anew the divine justice to wrath, the Most High will look with grace and favour upon His well-beloved Son become man for us, and, appeased through Him, will once more in mercy stretch out to us the hand of reconciliation.

SECTION V.

NOE'S CURSE AND BLESSING—THE BUILDING OF THE TOWER OF
BABEL—IDOLATRY.

“The progeny of Noe increased so quickly, that they were soon obliged to disperse themselves over the face of the earth. Before doing so, however, they desired to build a tower, the top of which should reach to heaven. God confounded their speech, so that they were obliged to desist from their labour.”

THE three sons of Noe, Sem, Cham, and Japheth, had left the ark together with their father. With him they had been witnesses of the divine vengeance, and of God's covenant with the human race; and to them, as its ancestors, the new race of men which was to repeople the earth, was to owe both its mortal life here, and its hope of life eternal.

Before we follow the distribution of the different races over the earth, we must advert to an event and a prophecy connected with that distribution; in which, besides a forecast of the Messiah, we find a proof that God foresees from the beginning the destinies of all nations, and adapts them to His inscrutable counsels.

Noe had made wine, and overcome by the strength of the drink, with which he was unacquainted, he lay one day asleep in his tent naked, and exposed to the disrespectful gaze of his son Cham. Cham in mockery told his brothers, who, with filial honour, approached their father backwards, and, with averted eyes, covered him with a cloak. When Noe, on awaking, learned what had happened, he spoke, not as has been ignorantly supposed, in the heat of passion, but in the spirit of prophecy, “Cursed be Chanaan, a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. Blessed be the Lord God of Sem; be Chanaan his servant. May God enlarge Japheth, and may he dwell in the tents of Sem, and Chanaan be his servant.” We may trace the fulfilment of this prophecy through successive ages, even to the present day.

The Lord Jehovah Noe praises as “the God of Sem.”

The patriarch saw in spirit the special favour which was to be shown by Jehovah to the posterity of Sem, and that he would by them be known and honoured, and therefore he gave Him praise.

The light of faith in the true God has indeed never been quenched in Sem's posterity; and from amongst them, came forth Israel the chosen people, and Jesus, the Saviour of the world.

In the children of Japheth, likewise, the paternal blessing has been fulfilled. He is the father of those innumerable tribes, Iberians, Ligurians, Celts, Germans, Thracians, who entered Europe and settled there. From him sprang the Romans and the Greeks, those two great nations who, before Christ's coming, had spread themselves so widely throughout the world; and who afterwards entered in such numbers, that Church which was founded by Sem's descendants,—our Lord, namely, and His apostles. Noe's prophetic words, that "Japheth shall dwell in the tents of Sem," are in this way literally fulfilled. In our own day we see the race of Japheth, the Christian nations of Europe, spread abroad through the entire world, extending themselves over the whole continent of America and to the distant shores of Australia; whilst in their midst stands Rome the Eternal City, the shield and refuge of Christendom; as before in the midst of the children of Sem, stood the temple of the one true God in Jerusalem.

The generation of Cham, on the contrary, soon fell into every abomination of vice and idolatry; and for this, the judgment which Noe had foretold concerning Chanaan, Cham's youngest son, fell upon them.

When at a later period the Israelites entered Palestine, the evil nations of the Chanaanites, were, at God's command, in part destroyed by them, and in part reduced to servitude.

Even now the words of Noe concerning the posterity of Cham are yet verified in the unhappy African races. They seem as though born to slavery; and, sunk in ignorance and degradation, they pass their lives in hard service to other nations.

But besides the prophecy contained in this history, the Fathers agree in regarding it as being in itself symbolical.¹

For Christ, too, planted a glorious vineyard, the Catholic Church. The cup of sorrow which His superabundant love for us caused Him to drain, reduced Him to a condition of the most abject humiliation and disgrace. Naked and torn, He hung in sight of the Jewish and Pagan world on the shameful cross, between two murderers.

To many, as to the Pharisees who blasphemed the dying Messias, the lowliness of the cross was a stone of stumbling. Obdurate hearts turned themselves away from Christianity, and perished for ever in their unbelief. Numbers, however, there were, who shrank not from a crucified Saviour. The splendour of His divinity streamed upon them from His sacred wounds. They humbly submitted their souls to the light of faith, and drew down upon themselves the fulness of God's blessing.

Thus (figuratively speaking) do those sons of Sem and Japheth, that is, Jews and Gentiles, who see in Christ crucified the power and wisdom of God, enjoy the divine blessing; but those others, Jews and Gentiles alike, who see in the Cross foolishness and a stumblingblock, are burdened by God's curse. They grovel in darkness and in the slavery of sin, and are doomed to eternal loss.

“ ‘ Unless the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it ’ (Ps. cxxvi. 1), even though they should labour at their task with iron perseverance and giant strength.”

If God, on the other hand, protect the work, the greatest might is powerless to overthrow it, or to hinder its completion.

This protection of Almighty God was, at a future period, to form one of the surest notes of the divinity of that Church, which, in the fulness of time, He called into being, in order that she might gather into her bosom the scattered nations of the earth; whilst in the dispersion of those nations, the certain failure, caused by the absence of His protection, was shown most strikingly for the instruction of all future ages.

This dispersion took place at the building of the tower of Babel.

¹ Cyprian, Ep. lxiii.; Ambrose in Ps. xxxix.; Jerome, Dial. adv. Luc., n. 22; August. cont. Faust., lib. xii. cap. 23, et civit. Dei, lib. xvi. cap. 2, Maximus Sermon., 30 et 34; Cyril of Alex. Glaph in Gen., lib. ii.; Isidore of Seville in Gen., cap. 8.

When the waters subsided, the ark had rested upon Ararat, a mountain of Armenia.

Descending before long from the mountain districts, the people entered the vast plain of Sennaar, a part of the country which was afterwards called Mesopotamia, and dwelt there. "And each one said to his neighbour, 'Come, let us make a city and a tower, the top whereof may reach to heaven, and let us make our name famous.'"

It was an arrogant undertaking, made in boastfulness of their own strength, and in defiance of Him who has His throne above the clouds.

Careless of God, they were bent only on glorifying themselves, and on erecting a monument of their own power and greatness. The Almighty frustrated their design. He confounded their speech, so that they were forced to cease from building, and that which was to have been a memorial of their renown, became now but a memorial of their foolishness.

But whilst He brought to nothing these idle dreams of men, God was also fulfilling the counsels of His beneficent providence.

From the words of Holy Scripture, which says "the Lord scattered them from that place into all lands," it is apparent that the division of mankind into separate nations, and their distribution over the earth, were intended by Almighty God. And this division and dispersion was indeed a signal benefit to the race. Want must soon have attacked a continually increasing community, and with it strife, rapine, bloodshed, and endless internal broils would have arisen, which would before long have destroyed in great measure the newly-formed population.

At a somewhat later period we see that even Abraham and Lot, just men, friends, and connected together by the ties of blood, were obliged to separate from one another, as, owing to the increasing numbers of their flocks, they could not otherwise prevent strife between their herdsmen.

And again, should impiety or immorality have developed itself in individuals of the community, with what fearful

rapidity would not corruption have been likely to spread amongst a closely-packed population. That this is no mere conjecture is shown abundantly by the degradation of the true religion, which took place so quickly amongst mankind even after their dispersion.

“For the posterity of Noe gave themselves over to their evil inclinations, and sank so low as to pray to the sun and moon, to men, beasts, and figures of gold or silver, of wood, or of stone, in place of to the true God. With this degraded worship, vice and crime of every sort increased to a fearful extent.”

Although, owing to the shortening of human life, which took place after the deluge, the transmission of the religious tradition from one generation to another was less easy than before, yet the remembrance of the first fall, of the promise of a Saviour, which was connected with it, and of God's judgment on sin, had impressed itself so strongly on the mind of man as never to be entirely obliterated.

With the memory of these events, the knowledge of the truths and precepts of religion which had been revealed by God, might have been handed on without difficulty to all posterity, even after the division of mankind into different nations and tribes.

How powerfully a religious belief of this kind, when intimately bound up with the fortunes of an entire people, can influence the human mind, we see at the present day exemplified in the Jewish race.

Scattered as they have been for so many ages throughout all lands, still with unshaken constancy they cling to the promise of a Saviour, which was given to their fathers. Still they keep their longing gaze fixed on the ancient land of promise, where, eighteen centuries ago, they saw with despairing sorrow their temple perish in the flames. They still observe the commandment to circumcise, and to abstain from certain kinds of food, which was given to their fathers; and they continue to keep holy the Sabbath, and to observe the appointed fasts and feasts of the law.

It was free then to man, through the help, of course, of unfailing divine grace, to have preserved his faith in God, and his hope in a future Redeemer; and by the observance of the natural law, which was deeply engraven upon his heart, to work out his eternal salvation.

The institution of sacrifice, of which the need continued always to be felt, kept alive their expectation of a Saviour; whilst the heavy yoke which since the fall has pressed on every child of Adam, was calculated to kindle and maintain their longing for His coming. Moreover, the belief in a God, and in the service which we owe to Him, is one which appeals so strongly even to natural reason alone, that it would appear as if a truth so self-luminous, as it were, and of such vast importance, could never become lost or obscured. But, misled by passion and the deceitful joys of sense, man soon turned aside into the paths of sin, lost sight more and more of his true destiny, and at last fearlessly abandoned himself to every sort of vice.

Sin is in its essence a rejection of God, and every sin contains within itself the germ of a complete act of rebellion.

If we remember this, we shall easily understand how it came to produce so quickly in the descendants of Noe one of its most fatal results, the rejection, namely, of God's revealed truth; which is what we do in fact so constantly see preceding the final rejection of God Himself. According to our Lord's own words, "Every one that doth evil hateth the light" (John iii. 20).

The words of Job, too, may be applied to this wicked generation, "They have been rebellious to the light;" they said to God, "Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways" (Job xxiv. 13; xxi. 14).

Faith once lost, the supernatural and certain knowledge of the invisible God, which is the product of faith alone, is lost also. For faith, as St. Paul says in his Epistle to the Hebrews, is the sure witness, the unfailing evidence of things not seen; it is through it, that the supernatural and invisible take form to us, as though they were present and visible.

The God who had revealed Himself to the human race in Adam, and had made a covenant with it in Noe, was no longer acknowledged by men. When faith, the divine light of the human intellect, had been once extinguished, the sure beacon by which reason might direct itself, vanished also. The natural apprehension of God became dimmed and in part destroyed; and plunging then as they did into the mire of sensuality, men became no longer able to bear the thought of eternal holiness and justice, and so the terrible falling away became complete and universal. Yet in this its deepest degradation, the race of men could never rid itself of the idea of a Supreme Being, whom it was bound to acknowledge and to propitiate.

Disabled as it was through sensuality from the apprehension of a Being above and beyond the world, and separate from nature, the human mind turned itself unhesitatingly to the worship of nature itself.¹ Man, created in the image of God, sank so low as to transfer to the meanest creatures the homage which he refused to the Most High.

"They changed," as St. Paul says, "the glory of the incorruptible God, into the likeness of the image of a corruptible man, and of birds, and of fourfooted beasts, and of creeping things."

It is usual in these days to set Christianity as far as possible aside, in order to make Paganism shine the more brightly; and for this reason it may not be amiss to add a few words to the short summary already given (vol. i. p. 40) of the unhappy errors into which men fell.

¹ Sin consists in a turning from God, and a surrender of self to creatures. Man turned from God, and in so doing lost faith, and with it the knowledge of the true God. His universal surrender of himself to creatures caused him at last to erect them into divinities. This, in few words, gives the origin as of ancient so of modern Paganism. The modern philosophy which is so much praised, the pantheistic and materialistic philosophy, which imparts its scientific aspect to modern unbelief, what else is it but the turning from the Creator, and the worship of the creature? It is the unhappy result of the complete denial and rejection of revealed truth, which again is caused by the moral disorders of the age, that is to say, by sin.

Struck with wonder at the fearful might of the elements, the solemn brilliance of the starry sky, and the beneficent working of so many of the powers of nature, it was towards these that mankind first directed its homage. They "have imagined," as Holy Scripture expressly says, "either the fire, or the water, or the swift air, or the circle of the stars, . . . or the sun and moon, to be the gods that rule the world."¹

From the elements and heavenly bodies, divine honours were next extended to human beings.

Men who had signalised themselves through famous deeds, or who by their useful discoveries had benefited their kind, by the rapid degeneration of grateful reverence into superstition, came to be numbered with the gods. In the belief of their divinity splendid temples and altars were erected to them, and feasts instituted in their honour. Men made images of them, not only of wood and stone, but of gold and silver and jewels. To these they prayed, and sought from them help and protection.

Thus lavishing his devotion on lifeless images, man fell into the senseless fetish worship of which Isaias speaks when he says, "He hath cut down an oak that stood among the trees of the forest, . . . part of it he burnt with fire, and with part of it he dressed his meat: he boiled pottage, and was warmed; but the residue thereof he made a god; he boweth down before it, and adoreth it, and prayeth unto it, saying, Deliver me, for thou art my god" (Isa. xlv.). But it was not dumb idols only, or heroes and men of renown, who were set in place of the living God, the Lord of Hosts. The most wicked and bloodthirsty tyrants received divine honours, from a spirit of abject servility, or else through violence extorted such homage for themselves.

Nay, so far did human folly go, that divine honours were claimed by kings for vicious favourites, the ministers of their shameful pleasures.

The Emperor Hadrian, in the second century, caused the debauched Antinous to be numbered among the countless host of Roman gods, erecting temples to him throughout the empire, appointing for him priests and sacrifices, and ordering yearly festivities to be held in his honour. And this worship, repulsive as it was to all moral feeling, was maintained during two centuries after his time.

¹ That the sun and moon were honoured as divinities until a late period, Plutarch, who was a contemporary of the apostles, and well versed in Greek and Roman philosophy, bears witness among many others. In his "*Bch. gegen Colot*," he accuses the Epicureans of frivolity, inasmuch "as they held for lifeless things the sun and moon, seeing that to these heavenly bodies all nations are accustomed to pray and offer sacrifices."

But not content with choosing for gods men whose lives were stained with the most disgraceful vices, there was not a crime or an abomination, which was not imputed to one or other of the heathen divinities by their worshippers, so that there was never an evil-doer, whether thief, murderer, or adulterer, who could not name a god or a goddess as his example and partaker in crime.

It is evident that the most complete moral disorder must have resulted from such a worship :—as Holy Scripture says, “ All things are mingled together, blood, murder, theft, dissimulation, corruption, and unfaithfulness, tumults, and perjury ” (Wisd. xiv. 25).

It was into an abyss of spiritual destitution such as this, that men sank, when, rejecting the light of faith, they abandoned themselves to their depraved inclinations.

Nations endowed by God with the richest and most glorious gifts of nature fell thus low. Thus it was with Assyria and Babylon, once so mighty ; with the rich and enterprising Phœnicians, and the Egyptians, proud as they were of their wisdom ; with the brilliant and inventive Greeks, and the world-victorious Romans.

Many of the monuments which have come down to our time show us the grandeur and glory of the old heathen world. Buildings and statues, works of poetry, philosophy, eloquence, of political and physical science—in all these we marvel, now at the unsurpassed beauty of form, now at the power of genius, the depth of insight, and the variety of knowledge, which they display. But Egypt, so long considered as the land of enlightenment and the school of wisdom, was given up, not only to deplorable idolatry, but to a most abominable beast-worship. Certain animals were considered by the Egyptians to be embodiments and vessels of the divinity—oxen, namely, and among them especially the black ox Apis, which was distinguished by certain white markings ;—cats, too, dogs, weasels, and eels, together with the ibis, crocodile, and many others, were thus held sacred. To kill, even accidentally, one of these beasts, was a crime which was mercilessly punished with death. A Roman soldier had the misfortune to knock down a cat by mistake, and in spite of the interposition of the king, he was put to death by an enraged populace. These beast-divinities had special dwelling-places set apart and consecrated to their use ; incense was burned before them, they were washed, anointed, and richly adorned, and put to sleep at night on soft cushions. Every house and family had its sacred animal. When it died it was mourned for as a beloved child ; its body was embalmed, and it was laid in a coffin, and reverently preserved. To this day Egypt is full of these mummied animals. Swallows, rats, frogs, toads, beetles even, were

kept in this manner.¹ It is not without cause that Holy Scripture says of these heathen nations, "Moreover they worship also the vilest creatures: but things without sense compared to these, are worse than they" (Wisd. xv. 18).

It would seem that an idolatry so abominable, so dishonouring, and so irrational, could not have been due merely to an aberration or darkening of the intellect, but that it must indeed have implied a direct surrender to the powers of darkness, who, in despair of dethroning Almighty God, had succeeded instead in seducing mankind into withdrawing its homage from the Creator, and bestowing it on the meanest of His creatures.

We cannot doubt that the proud spirit who was so bold as to demand adoration from the Incarnate Son of God, would leave no diabolical art unemployed, in order to obtain it from the sinful children of Adam; and that so idolatry, was in reality a form of devil-worship. This opinion finds support both in Holy Scripture and in tradition. (See vol. ii. p. 69.) Much other evidence might also be adduced in its favour, especially with reference to those arts of magic and divination which were so largely practised amongst the heathen in the name of religion. To give in passing one instance of this kind:—Is it not strange that serpents, which so generally inspire fear and disgust, should have been regarded as they were, not by the Egyptians only, but by other widely-separated nations—Hindoos, namely, Lombards, Lithuanians, and Lettonians—as beneficent and protecting spirits? They were fed, tended, and honoured in the temples and houses; sacrifices were offered to them, and they were made use of for purposes of magic and sooth-saying.

Even the Greeks and Romans were not altogether free from this superstition. With the Hindoos in Asia, and the negro races in Africa, it is to this day so powerful that in India the most poisonous snakes are peculiarly the objects of veneration, and amongst certain negroes, a special order of priestesses is maintained in their honour.²

It is still more remarkable that most nations, at any rate worshipped, not only the good but the evil powers, whom they represented, sometimes as being cruel, bloodthirsty, and destructive monsters, sometimes as outcast spirits of darkness. Layard, whilst engaged in excavating the ruins of Nineveh, found at Mosul a people (the Jezidi) who far and near were stigmatised and held in

¹ Döllinger, *Heidenthum und Judenthum*, p. 426. According to Montfaucon (*Egyptian Antiquities*, b. i. chap. 10), there are innumerable mummied beetles found in Egypt.

² In the kingdom of Whydah (Migne, *Dic. de Mytholog.*, p. 1274; Achen. *Naturgesch.* vol. vi. p. 544).

abhorrence, as devil-worshippers.¹ He learned from them that they did indeed recognise a Supreme Being, but that they offered Him neither prayer nor sacrifice. Of the devil they spoke with much greater respect. Satan, they held, was now suffering punishment for his rebellion against the Divine will. He had not, however, ceased to be all powerful, they said, and would one day regain his high place in the hierarchy of heaven; and that it was needful, therefore, to honour and propitiate him, both as being now the means of injury to man, and because he will one day have it in his power to reward him.

But it is when we consider the evil results of idolatry, that the malice of the fiend becomes most evident. That he should have set the meanest animals in the place of the Lord of heaven and earth, would have displayed only his impotent hate towards God; but that the idolatry so brought about should have for its effect the degradation and destruction of the human race, shows at the same time his implacable enmity towards man.

Lust and cruelty lay at the very root of the whole system of idolatry; through the former God's image was degraded, trodden down, and insulted; whilst to the latter innumerable lives were sacrificed. It is impossible to describe the unbridled licence which was bound up with the heathen worship; and to its truly astounding barbarity, the millions of human sacrifices bear witness, with which, under the reign of paganism, there was scarcely a spot unstained on the whole surface of the earth.

Not only, as with the Mexicans, were strangers and captives barbarously slaughtered by thousands before the images of the gods; but parents were forced to offer their children as victims to a horrible death.

The rites which had obtained among many nations of Middle and Western Asia—among the Phœnicians, namely, and their many colonies—were indeed of a nature peculiarly fiendish. Baal or Moloch, a hollow brazen image, with the head of an ox, was heated red hot, and the unfortunate child destined as his offering was then placed upon his outstretched arms, whence, through a hole in his breast, it rolled into the glowing furnace beneath.

The mother of the victim was forced to be present at this horrible scene; and whilst the shrieks of her child were being drowned in the noise of flutes and drums, she might neither by tears, sighs, or in any manner whatever, give the least testimony of grief. Should she show but a sign of pity, she would be accounted dishonoured. To this fate were consigned the offspring of the noblest houses, children the most hopeful and beloved.

¹ Populärer Bericht üb. die Ausgrab. zu Ninive, p. 129.

When in the war with Agathocles, in Sicily, the Carthaginians lost a battle, they attributed their defeat to the anger of the gods, at the recent substitution of the children of slaves, for those boys of noble blood, who had formerly been yearly offered in sacrifice. On inquiry, it was discovered that the greater number of parents had hidden their children; and then two hundred boys of the noblest families were at once offered in expiation, whilst three hundred more, who also lay under suspicion, gave themselves up willingly as sin-offerings for their country.

History, too, relates of Hamilcar, the Carthaginian general, that, in order to obtain victory from the gods, he offered, from sunrise to sunset, countless human victims in the fire.

Man had said to God in his arrogance, "Leave us, we desire not the knowledge of Thy way," and therefore God, as the Apostle St. Paul said, "suffered all nations to walk in their own way" (Acts xiv. 15).

Like the prodigal son, whose fate our Lord describes to us in His beautiful parable,—when, through vicious and profligate living, they had carelessly trifled away all the gifts they had received from their Heavenly Father, even faith, that most precious of all gifts;—then, like him, they entered the service of a cruel tyrant, the evil spirit, of whom our Lord says that "he was a murderer from the beginning." God called, taught, warned, and punished in vain.

Only from extremity of misery, would they become again susceptible to grace, and return once more to their Father's house.

SECTION VI.

THE CALL OF ABRAHAM—GOD'S PROMISES—THE SACRIFICE OF MELCHISEDECH—THE DESTRUCTION OF SODOM.

"It was destined nevertheless, that the true faith and the hope in a future Saviour should not perish entirely from off the earth. For this end God chose Abraham, made a covenant with him, and promised, that of his posterity, should come the Messiah in whom all nations of the earth should be blessed (Gen. xiii. 3). (B.C. 1920). For this cause God singled out the descendants of Abraham (who were called Hebrews,¹ and later on, Jews or Israelites) from amongst all nations, and as time went on, revealed Himself to them often and wonderfully."

ABRAHAM, a descendant of the pious Sem, and chosen by

¹ The name of "Hebrew," by which Abraham was then already called (Gen. xiv. 13), is traced by some to Heber, the grandson of Sem, and Abraham's ancestor. These hold that at the confusion of tongues the original speech was

God to be the future father of the faithful, was dwelling in the land of Chaldæa (Mesopotamia), in the midst of an idolatrous people, when God's command came to him, "Go forth from thy own land, and from thy people, and out of thy father's house, and come into the land which I will show thee, and I will make thee a great people, and bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be the father of the Blessed One, and in thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed."

To this glorious promise was afterwards added another. Confiding cheerfully in God, Abraham, together with Sara his wife, and Lot, the son of his deceased brother, left his home, and arrived under the Divine guidance, in the beautiful and fruitful land of Canaan. Here the Most High again appeared to him, and said, "I will give this land to thy descendants." Filled with gratitude, and trusting firmly in the Divine word, Abraham built an altar, and offered sacrifice to the Lord.

The solemn promises which God gave to His servant, and afterwards repeatedly confirmed, related not merely to earthly blessings, but to those also which are imperishable and heavenly.

The expression "In thee," or, as in a later promise it is worded, "In thy seed"—in one, that is, from among thy descendants—"shall all nations of the earth be blessed," can refer only to those spiritual blessings, which the Saviour of the world was one day to shower down upon all people.

Here, too, the promise was given, that from the race of Abraham was to come forth that Redeemer, whose advent had already been foretold in Paradise.

preserved in this family, and that not only the speech, but the family itself was designated as "Hebrew."

Others attribute the name of "Hebrew," which is equivalent to "a passer-over," to Abraham's having been obliged to pass over the river Euphrates in order to reach the land of Canaan.

The name of "Israelite" is derived from Jacob. He was called "Israel," that is, "a contender with God," by the angel who wrestled with him (Gen. xxxii. 28). The word "Jew" is from Juda, Jacob's chosen son.

Abraham was in his seventy-eighth year when he left Mesopotamia. Twenty-four years later, the Lord again revealed Himself to him and said, "I am God, the Almighty, walk before Me, and be perfect; and I will make My covenant between Me and between thee and between thy seed, throughout all generations; an everlasting covenant that I am thy God, and the God of thy seed after thee."

The covenant thus made between God and between Abraham and his posterity, consisted on God's side, in the solemn confirmation of His promise already given, and upon Abraham's side, in a solemn engagement ever to maintain his faith in the one true God, and this His promise, and to observe all His commands.

In virtue of this covenant, God, in an especial manner, consecrated to Himself the race of Abraham, and called them "His people." And for this reason it was that Moses could say to them in time to come, "Thou art a holy people to the Lord thy God. The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be His peculiar people, of all peoples that are upon the earth" (Deut. vii. 6).

It was as the sign of this covenant—as the mark, that is, of entrance into it, and of incorporation with His people—that the rite of circumcision was ordained by God. This rite was a type also of baptism, through which we enter the new covenant of grace, and are incorporated with Christ.

To the race of Abraham, this sign, imprinted as it was upon their flesh, would serve continually to remind them that they were consecrated to an All-Holy God, and were bound therefore to strive against and subdue the flesh with its inclinations and lusts.

St. Paul, with regard to this, tells those Jews who made boast of their circumcision, that the circumcision of the flesh is unprofitable, unless accompanied by the circumcision of the heart, and the observance of the law (Rom. ii. 25-29). Thus God separated to Himself a people from among the idolatrous nations, and elected them as the recipients and guardians of the Divine revelation, to the end that the true

faith, and the hope in the promised Saviour, might be preserved by them intact, until the time of His coming.

For this reason God lavished on this highly-favoured race special mercies and graces, and taught and guided it from age to age, with the kindness, and also with the severity, of a father.

We behold Him conversing familiarly with its patriarchs, making known to them His pleasure, and communicating His commands and promises; sometimes by means of angels, sometimes through visions, or interior illuminations. These Divine manifestations were through them to be transmitted to their sons and grandsons. For this reason God says, "Can I hide from Abraham what I am about to do? for I know that he will command his children and his household after him, to keep the way of the Lord, and do judgment and justice."

From time to time, too, God raised up extraordinary men, men full of wisdom and power,—teachers, judges, and prophets, to guard the nation from the spreading poison of idolatry, to keep alive within it supernatural faith, and trust in the Divine promises, and to urge upon it a fuller correspondence with its high calling.

Meanwhile, though suffering those heathen nations, who had so faithlessly abandoned Him, to follow their own ways, God had not left them without those means and graces which were needful for salvation. With fatherly wisdom and goodness He had so provided, that all who truly desired eternal life should be able to attain it. (Vol. ii. p. 123 or 121.)

Examples even were not wanting, of men who, dwelling among the heathen, served faithfully the true God. Such a one we meet with in the history of Abraham—Melchisedech, namely, of whom mention has already been made.

(Vol. ii. p. 184 or 183, n. 2; or vol. iv. p. 305 or 306, n. 3.)

Living as he did in the heathen country of Chanaan, he was yet in an especial manner a worshipper and priest of the Most High.

The manner of his meeting with Abraham was as follows:

Lot had parted from his uncle Abraham, and settled himself in Sodom, a city in the fruitful grassy country of the Jordan. After some time the land was invaded by foreign kings, who plundered the towns of Sodom and Gomorrha, and carried off many of the inhabitants, amongst whom was Lot, into slavery.

As soon as Abraham heard of this, he armed his household, hastened after the enemy, fell upon them during the night, and freed all the prisoners.

On his homeward journey, he was met by Melchisedech, king of Salem, who offered, as the priest of the Most High, a thank-offering of bread and wine. Melchisedech is a true type of Jesus Christ. St. Paul explains this in his Epistle to the Hebrews; and the 119th Psalm, in speaking of the Messias, calls Him "a priest after the order of Melchisedech."

(1.) Like our Lord, Melchisedech is at once priest and king—a king, too, of justice and of peace, for the meaning of the name "Melchisedech" is "king of justice," and "Salem" signifies "peace."

(2.) The priesthood of Christ, was not inherited by Him through descent from the priestly race of Aaron, but received directly from God; neither did he yield it up to others, but himself remains a priest to all eternity. So in Holy Scripture, we see Melchisedech standing alone in his priesthood, with neither sacerdotal forerunners or descendants.

(3.) Melchisedech's priesthood, like Christ's, was far higher than that of Aaron. Thus we see Abraham, though a priest also himself, and the ancestor of Aaron, receiving his blessing and paying tithes to him, as to his superior.

(4.) Melchisedech's offering of bread and wine foreshadows the unbloody offering made by Christ under those forms, and which is thus daily renewed on our altars.

The inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrha before mentioned, and of the neighbouring cities, were "sinners before the face of the Lord beyond measure."

The invasion which had threatened them with destruction

and misery had in no way alarmed them for their wickedness, and the wonderful deliverance which God had wrought for them failed to move them to penance.

Their sins cried to heaven for punishment, and God resolved to make "them an example (of His avenging justice) to those that should hereafter act wickedly" (2 Pet. ii. 9).

Therefore two angels came to Lot, for that "in sight and hearing he was just" (*Ibid.* 8), and led him, his wife, and his two daughters, out of the city, "and the Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrha brimstone and fire from the Lord of heaven. And He destroyed those cities and all the country about, all the inhabitants of the cities, and all things that spring from the earth" (Gen. xix. 24, 25; Luke xvii. 29).

Even to the present day this tract of country, once known as the garden of Palestine, presents a terrible aspect of ruin and desolation.

In a deep basin, enclosed by steep craggy rocks which rise around it like giant walls, lies the Dead Sea, the site of the burned cities of the plain.¹ It is nine German miles in length, by from two to three in breadth (in English miles, 46 by 10). The traces of heat-action upon the rocks is so evident, the surrounding heaps of scoriæ so large and numerous, that the marks of fire may well be said to be here as indelibly set, as are those of water on the rest of the earth's surface.

Lynch, who in 1848 explored the spot thoroughly on behalf of the American Government, exclaims at the sight of such desolation, "God's curse, it is evident, hangs over these impure waters."

The waters are indeed nauseously bitter, and salt to an extreme degree. No living thing is to be found in them; fish brought down by the Jordan die at once. If a flight of birds should wander thither, they wing their way as fast as possible across the lake, to escape its poisonous exhalations. The shores are for the most part waste and bare, and at best the salt earth can produce only miserable weeds.

¹ A very correct account of it is given by Mislin (*Die Heilige Orte*, book iii. chap. 36, 37).

It is here that those "apples of Sodom" grow, which are, as we are told, a beautiful reddish-yellow fruit to look at, but if touched, break in pieces and crumble to dust.

The whole landscape may be to this day described in the words of the prophet Sophonias (ii. 9): "Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrha, the dryness of thorns, and heaps of salt, and a desert even for ever."

Lynch, whom we quoted above, concludes the history of his journey with the following words:—

"It is for the learned to explain the facts which we have thus carefully collected.

"We approached the lake with opinions widely divided. One of us was a sceptic, and another, I believe, was not disposed to place credence in the Mosaic narrative. But after twenty-two days of careful investigation, we were all, if I mistake not, unanimously convinced of the truth of the account given in Holy Scripture concerning the destruction of this plain."

Evidence also is not wanting concerning the wonderful transformation of Lot's wife into a pillar of salt. The words, "A standing pillar of salt is a monument of an incredulous soul," were written more than a thousand years after the destruction of Sodom, by the holy author of the book of Wisdom (x. 17). And some centuries later the Jewish historian, Flavius Josephus, testifies that the pillar was yet remaining in his time, and that he himself had seen it (Jewish Antiquities, book i. chap. 2).

SECTION VII

ISMAEL'S BANISHMENT—THE TRIAL OF ABRAHAM.

"In order that He might prove Abraham, God commanded him to offer his only son as a sacrifice upon the mountain of Moria. Abraham at once set forth; himself laid upon his son the wood for the burnt-offering, and went with him up the mountain. When they had arrived at the place appointed, Isaac willingly laid himself upon the wood as a sacrifice. But God sent an angel to save him, and He blessed Abraham, and renewed His former promises."

DIVINE Providence had ordered that Abraham, to whom had been given promises so glorious, should prove his faith and unshaken confidence in them, through many and severe trials.

A numerous posterity had been repeatedly promised to him, but his wife Sara, nevertheless, still remained childless. Believing that he ought to use human means, in order to provide his house with an heir, at Sara's desire and conformably with the custom of the time, he took to wife besides, Agar the Egyptian, one of her women. (Vol. iv. p. 633 or 635.) By her he had a son whom he named Ishmael. But this son was not the son of promise. "Sara thy wife," God had said, "shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name Isaac, and I will establish my covenant with him for a perpetual covenant, and with his seed after him" (Gen. xvii. 19). At last, when Abraham was a hundred years old, and when Sara had attained to the great age of ninety, she bore Isaac, the long-desired son of promise.

In proportion to the greatness of Abraham's joy in this his son, must have been the anguish of his heart, when, later on, the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "Take thy only-begotten son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and go into the land of vision (Moria), and there thou shalt offer him for an holocaust" (Gen. xxii. 2).

And this blow must have been all the more crushing, owing to his having previously, at God's command, banished

from his house Ismael, his first-born, together with his mother Agar.

These commands, in regard to both the sons of Abraham, were not given by God as trials merely;—a prophetic meaning also lay hidden within them.

The history of Ismael's banishment is one too important to a right understanding of Holy Scripture, to be omitted here.

When Sara saw her son roughly used by Ismael, she said to Abraham, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with my son Isaac."

This seemed to Abraham harsh, but God commanded him to do as Sara desired. In the morning, therefore, Abraham gave Agar bread and a bottle of water, and sent her away with the boy. When, in the midst of the desert, the water was exhausted, Agar laid the boy under a tree, and, withdrawing herself to a distance that she might not see her son die, she lifted up her voice and wept.

But God had heard the boy's prayers, and He sent an angel to her, who comforted her, and told her that the Lord would make of Ismael a great people. And God opened her eyes, so that she saw a well of water, and there she filled the bottle, and gave her son drink. And the Lord protected him, and he dwelt in the desert and became a mighty archer, "whose hand was against all men, and all men's hands against him" (Gen. xvi. 12).

St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Galatians, gives us a full explanation of the mystery here concealed.

"Abraham," he says (Gal. iv.), "had two sons, the one by a bondwoman, the other by a free woman, which things are said by an allegory, for these are the two testaments," the old and the new. Agar typifies the Jewish, Sara the Christian Church;—Ismael is the representative of the Jews, Isaac of the Christians.

(1.) Thus Agar came from the land of bondage, and her offspring, like herself, was born to servitude.

So too, the Jewish Church had her origin in Arabia, which

was a land of slavery; and thence too, from Sina, a mountain of Arabia, she received the law. Like Agar, she gendereth to bondage; the Jews, her children, being constrained, through fear of punishment or hope of temporal reward, to a slavish observance of the law.

On the other hand, Sara, the free wife, is the image of the Church of Christ, whose members are God's children, and who, set free as they are from the Jewish ordinances, serve their Heavenly Father, not through fear, but through love.

(2.) The son of Agar was the first-born, but he was not the promised child of blessing to the nations. Judaism, too, preceded Christianity, but did not spread itself throughout the world.

Sara, so long barren, bore at last a son, in whom all nations of the earth were to be blessed; and thus she typifies the Christian Church, which at first counted but few members, but at last bore innumerable peoples to the Lord; and to which, therefore, are addressed the divinely-inspired words of the prophet, "Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not, break forth and cry, thou that travailest not, for the desolate hath many more children than she that hath an husband."

(3.) Again, as Ismael was the son of Abraham in a natural manner only, it is by nature alone that the Jews are his descendants.

The birth of Isaac, on the other hand, was contrary to the ordinary course of nature, and brought about by the miraculous interposition of God; and thus Christians through Divine grace, and through the supernatural regeneration of holy baptism, become Abraham's spiritual children, and members of the Christian Church.

"But," continues the Apostle (Gal. iv. 29, 30), "as then he that was born according to the flesh (Ismael) persecuted him that was after the spirit (Isaac), so also is it now" (so, that is, do Jews now act toward Christians).

But what saith the Scripture? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman."

Thus the Jews who refused to believe, and who persecuted and bore enmity towards the Christians, have been cast forth from their Father's house, and have forfeited the inheritance of God's children,—justification and salvation in Christ.

(5.) "Agar wandering in the desert with her son is a type," says St. Isidore of Seville (Fragment on Genesis, xvii. 4, 5), "of the Jewish Church, which, with her children, wanders restlessly over the earth, cast forth from her own land, without priest or sacrifice, and ignorant of Christ, the true way."

By God's answer to the tears and prayers of the boy, in that He showed him by means of an angel a spring of water, Holy Scripture signifies that such Jews, as turning to Christ, and shedding tears of sorrow for their past errors, will find mercy with God, and will have the closed eyes of their spirit opened to perceive a well of living water, even Christ, who says, "I am the well of living water; whoso thirsteth let him come and drink." The apparent severity of Ismael's banishment will cease to be surprising, if, in accordance with this explanation, we regard it as a type or a prophecy.

The Fathers, again, are unanimous in regarding the offering of Isaac as typifying in a very special manner the sacrifice of Christ on the cross.

(1.) Isaac was the only and much-loved son of Abraham, and in like manner is Christ the only-begotten Son of God, in whom His Heavenly Father is well pleased.

(2.) Abraham did not spare this his only son, but was on the point of sacrificing him. The Heavenly Father also "spared not even His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all" (Rom. viii. 32).

(3.) The wood on which he was to be slain was borne by Isaac up the mountain upon his shoulders, and in like manner we behold the Incarnate God ascending the hill of Calvary, laden with the wood of the cross.

(4.) Contrary to the wonted custom by which the victim was first killed, and then laid upon the altar, Isaac placed himself there whilst living, and thus too did Christ the Lamb

of God stretch Himself out a living sacrifice upon the altar of the holy cross.

(5.) Isaac being then about thirty years of age could have escaped without difficulty the impending death; but he offered himself willingly in obedience to his father. Jesus Christ, equal in His divine power to the Eternal Father, could have avoided the shameful death of the cross, but "He was offered because it was His own will" (Isa. liii. 7) in obedience to His Heavenly Father.

(6.) Isaac died in will but not in deed. The Son of God died according to His humanity, but not according to His divinity; though His death was the expression as well of His divine as of His human will.

In order that Isaac's should be a true type of the bloody sacrifice of Christ, God provided Abraham with a ram to be offered as a burnt-offering in the place of his son.

(7.) Isaac, doomed as he had been to death, is restored alive to his father. The Saviour, who suffered death upon the cross, returned gloriously again to life.

(8.) After the completion of the sacrifice God renewed with a solemn oath the promise which He had before made to Abraham. "By My own self have I sworn, because thou hast done this thing, and hast not spared thy only-begotten son for My sake, I will bless thee, and will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand that is by the sea shore; . . . and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed My voice" (Gen. xxii. 16-18). Because Christ was "obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross, therefore God also hath exalted Him, and hath given Him a name which is above all names, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, earth, and under the earth" (Phil. ii. 8-10).

It is worthy of remark, that though there were several mountains which were called by the name of Moria, yet the tradition most commonly received, points out that one, upon which, at a later period, Solomon built the temple, as the place of Abraham's sacrifice.

This mountain lies at a distance of about three days' travel from Bersabee, where Abraham was dwelling at the time when he set forth upon his sorrowful journey, and Holy Scripture tells us that upon the third day he saw the mountain from afar. The hill upon which the temple stood, forms one continuous ridge with the hill of Calvary, and so, according to this tradition, the great sacrifice of redemption was accomplished in that same place, where all the foregoing sacrifices of which it was the fulfilment, had taken place,—the sacrifice of Isaac, that is to say, and those too which were afterwards offered in the temple.

SECTION VIII.

THE BIRTH, HISTORY, AND FAMILY OF JACOB—THE HUMILIATION AND PROMOTION OF JOSEPH—JACOB'S PROPHECY AND DEATH.

“ Isaac's son, the patriarch Jacob, lived with his family in the land of Chanaan, into which Abraham had been called by God. He had twelve sons, from whom were descended the people of Israel.”

WHEN Isaac was forty years old, he was provided by his father's care with a virtuous wife, Rebecca, the daughter of his paternal uncle.

God loved Isaac, and visibly protected him. He blessed him, and so multiplied his possessions, that the king of the Philistines came to him to make a covenant with him.

And God renewed all those promises to him, which He had before solemnly given to Abraham. But yet his wife Rebecca remained childless.

At last, after twenty years of marriage, and twenty years' trial, therefore, of his faith and confidence in God, the Lord heard his prayers, and his wife Rebecca bore him twin sons, Esau and Jacob.

Previous to their birth, God revealed to Rebecca His eternal decree with regard to the two brothers, “that the elder should serve the younger,” to whom, therefore, the

rights of the first-born were to be transferred (Gen. xxv. 23; Rom. ix. 13).

It was not without cause that God so ordained. As we learn from St. Paul, He intends thus to show us that He bestows His grace freely on whom He will, and to teach us to regard this grace as the unmerited gift of Divine goodness. By the special permission of God, Jacob succeeded in obtaining from his brother Esau, for the small price of a mess of pottage, the renunciation of his birthright; and from Isaac, his father, the solemn blessing of the first-born.

However we may be inclined to judge the conduct of Jacob, we cannot yet fail, with the chief of the Fathers, to see in these events a dispensation of God for the fulfilment of His eternal decrees.¹ Isaac himself recognised this after he had given his blessing.

He was not angry with Jacob on being aware of the deception which had been practised, but, on the contrary, confirmed the blessing already given, with the words, "I have blessed him, and blessed shall he remain."

And this blessing he again, at a later period, of his own accord repeated (Gen. xxviii. 3, 4). Here, too, is hidden a mystery, and a foreshadowing of the Messiah. It contains also a prophetic indication of the temporal history of the two races.

This again is more directly given in Isaac's words to Esau, when he was bewailing the loss of the blessing which his father had bestowed upon Jacob, "Thou shalt live by the sword, and shalt serve thy brother, and the time shall come when thou shalt shake off and loose his yoke from thy neck" (Gen. xxvii. 40). The Edomites, Esau's descendants, were indeed a turbulent and warlike race; they were conquered in later times by King David; and subsequently, after a hundred and fifty years of servitude, they freed themselves in the reign of King Joram, from that yoke which, seven hundred years before, it had been foretold they should bear.

¹ To the relation of this occurrence St. Augustine adds the words, "O res gestas, sed prophetice gestas; in terra sed cœlib; tus per homines, sed divinitus."

Most glorious and singular was the promise addressed to Jacob, "Let peoples serve thee, and tribes worship thee: be thou lord of thy brethren, and let thy mother's children bow down before thee," &c. (*Ibid.* ver. 29).

Those solemn words of blessing are alone fully realised, by the promised Messiah and His kingdom. Not merely did the sons of Edom, and many others besides, fall down before Him in adoration, but countless nations serve Him, and all tribes render Him homage, for He it is who is the Lord of heaven and earth. Whoso shall curse Him is cursed of God eternally, and whoso shall bless Him is blessed exceedingly, and enriched with the fulness of heavenly gifts.

By the levity of Esau's behaviour is typified that carnal-mindedness, through which the Jewish nation rendered itself unworthy of these heavenly blessings.

Therefore St. Paul warns the Hebrews not to despise the grace of God like Esau, "who for one mess, sold his first birthright."

"For know ye," he continues, "that afterwards when he desired to inherit the benediction, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, although with tears he had sought it" (Heb. xii. 16, 17).

And it is because this carnal-mindedness of theirs had caused the Jews obstinately to reject grace when offered, that Christ says to them, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation yielding the fruits thereof" (Matt. xxi. 43).

Like Esau, the Jews wept and lamented, when, in the destruction of their city and temple, and in the dispersion of their nation over the earth, they read the signs of God's departing favour. But to this day their tears and entreaties have found no response, for their tears, like those of Esau, were tears, not of repentance for their great crime, but of sorrow only for the loss of temporal blessings and privileges; and their prayers, like his, were for earthly prosperity, and not for heavenly gifts.

To escape the vengeance of his brother, who could not

forgive the slight he had received, Jacob, now seventy-seven years old, took his staff in his hand, and set off with his father's blessing for Mesopotamia, where dwelt his uncle Laban.

Laban was a selfish and grasping man, and for twenty years Jacob served him amidst many trials and hardships. "Day and night," he says of himself, "was I parched with heat and with frost, and sleep departed from my eyes." But the blessing of God was visibly upon him; in all his trials the Lord was in a wonderful manner his defence and shield.

When on his journey from his father's house he laid his tired head upon a stone, to sleep, the Lord appeared to him in a vision, standing above a ladder which reached up to heaven; and upon which angels ascended and descended; and there, proclaiming Himself the God of Abraham and Isaac, renewed to him the solemn promises which had been given to his fathers.

On his homeward journey God again was his defence. He protected him from the wiles of Laban, sent angels to meet him, and Himself, under the likeness of an angel, gave him His blessing, and prompted the yet revengeful Esau to a brotherly reconciliation.

Jacob now fixed his dwelling in the land of Chanaan, whilst Esau settled in the hill country of Seir, later on called Edom or Idumæa.

Prospered as he was by God, Jacob's riches increased exceedingly. "He had many flocks, maid-servants and men-servants, camels and asses" (Gen. xxx. 43). His possessions, however, did not at all enchain his heart to the transitory things of earth. His mind and endeavours were bent rather on fulfilling the will of God, from whom he confidently looked one day to receive possession of his true eternal dwelling.

He, like his fathers, regarded himself, as St. Paul says, as merely a pilgrim and stranger in the land of Chanaan, and moved his tent from place to place, according as he could find good pasture for his flocks.

He bought a span of land, where he built an altar on which to offer sacrifice to the "mighty God of Israel," and with this he was content, and did not seek to obtain more, or to build cities and convenient houses to dwell in. Patiently and faithfully he waited for the fulfilment of the Divine promises; and thus furnishes us in his life with the pattern of a true Christian, who, whilst still on earth, fixes his heart on God, and has his conversation in heaven.

During his sojourn in Mesopotamia, Jacob had judged right to choose for himself a pious helpmeet; and as the reward of fourteen years' service he received successively from Laban his two daughters, Lia and Rachel, in marriage.

Rachel, proving unfruitful, at her desire he took her maid to wife also, and afterwards complied with a like demand from Lia; marriages of this sort with several women at once being at that time forbidden by no law (St. Augustine, *City of God*, b. xxii. chap. 47).

By these four wives he had twelve sons and a daughter. The names of his sons were Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Juda, Dan, Nepthali, Gad, Aser, Issachar, Zabulon, Joseph, and Benjamin.

We may here notice that all these sons, those born of the bondwomen as well as the children of the free wives, became the fathers of the tribes of Israel, which afterwards shared amongst them the Land of Promise. And here we see fresh evidence, that when Ismael, the son of the bondwoman Agar, was excluded from the inheritance of the children of Abraham, it was for the mystical reason explained above.

"One of Jacob's sons, Joseph, whom God had chosen to be in his life a type of Jesus Christ, was sold by his brothers into Egypt. There he was first falsely accused and cast into prison, and afterwards raised by the king to the highest rank in the land. As the deliverer of the people in the years of a terrible famine, he received the name of 'Saviour of the world.'"

For this most striking and beautiful history see Gen. xxxvii. and xxxix.-xlviii.

The history of Joseph is a most instructive one. Our attention must, however, be directed first of all to the discernment of its mystical signification. In the offering of Isaac, we saw set forth the sacrifice and death of Jesus Christ, whilst here, in the wonderful life of Joseph, we see clearly outlined, on the one hand, the deep humiliation, on the other, the exaltation and glorification, of the Redeemer of the world.

(1.) Joseph was sent to his brothers by his father. When, after a toilsome journey, he reached them, he was stripped by them, in anger, of the many-coloured coat, which, as a special mark of love, had been given him by his father, cast without mercy into a pit, and at last sold to some strange merchants for twenty pieces of silver.

All this they did to the innocent youth, because he had revealed an evil deed of one of them to his father, because, too, he was the one whom, of all his children, his father most loved, and because it appeared through many dreams which he had had in succession, that he was some day to become their lord and ruler. Do not these incidents most forcibly recall to us that Jesus Christ the Divine Son was sent into the world by His Father, to us men His brethren, who had wandered far from our Father in heaven; that He was received not only coldly, but with the utmost hostility; that he was persecuted, sold for thirty pieces of silver, delivered up into the hands of a strange nation, the Romans, and stripped before His death of His garments? Jesus Christ, too, had drawn upon Himself the irreconcilable hatred of the Jews, because He, the Most Holy, had denounced their crimes, and preached to them the divine lessons of the Gospel; because, through countless miracles, He was eminently distinguished and glorified by God the Father; and because, too, He announced to them that greatness and majesty of His, which prophets had foretold, and patriarchs had longed to see, therefore they said to Him, "Whom dost Thou make Thyself?" and took up stones to cast at Him (John viii. 53-59).

(2.) Joseph was brought as a common slave into the house of Potiphar, where he rejected with horror the proposals of his master's adulterous wife. She, in her anger, slandered him, and so it came to pass that, innocent and helpless as he was, undefended by any one, and without a word of complaint on his own part, he was put in chains with other prisoners, to one of whom he foretold his approaching liberation. Christ was seized as a malefactor, led before the Jewish high priest, and required by the Synagogue, "that faithless and adulterous bride" of which the prophets speak, to deny that He was the Son of God and the promised Messias. Because He steadfastly maintained His Godhead, false witnesses were called against Him. Forsaken of all, shamefully betrayed, with no word of complaint falling from His mouth, Jesus Christ was condemned, in the face of His evident innocence, nailed to the cross between two thieves, and to one of these, the penitent thief, He foretold, in this abyss of ignominy and humiliation, his approaching admission into Paradise.

(3.) After a three years' captivity, Joseph left his gloomy prison. King Pharaoh caused him to be arrayed in a rich garment, and put a gold chain about his neck, and made him mount his own chariot, and sent a herald to cry "that all should bow the knee before him, and should know that he was made governor over the whole land of Egypt" (Gen. xli. 43).

After having lain in the grave for three days, Jesus Christ rose again, robed in the garment of immortality, and surrounded with heavenly glory. God the Father set Him at His right hand in heaven, above principalities and powers, that in His name every knee should bow, "and that every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father" (Phil. ii. 11).

Every one in the land of Egypt was subject to Joseph, except Pharaoh himself, who made him ruler. Of Christ, too, it is written, "That all things are put under His feet, excepting Him who put all things under Him" (1 Cor. xv. 26, 27).

And as with Joseph, so with Christ, all the attempts of the wicked, served only to exalt Him upon the throne of His glory.

(4.) Pharaoh changed Joseph's name, and called him instead by one signifying "Saviour of the world." And so indeed he became, for when during the pressure of the general famine, men of all nations came and cried to Pharaoh for bread, they were told by him to "go to Joseph," and then Joseph opened the store-houses, which in the fruitful years he had filled with grain, and distributed it to the hungry people who came flocking to him from throughout Egypt, and from all lands, thus saving the world from perishing miserably of starvation.

In a far higher sense did the incarnate Son of God fulfil the signification of the name of Jesus or "Saviour," which by Divine command He received at His circumcision. For without Him, no child of Adam could have escaped the eternal loss which through sin had devolved upon the whole human race.

It is to Him, the Divine Mediator and dispenser of grace, that the Heavenly Father sends all who pray to Him, to be delivered from eternal destruction. He it is who, through His Church, places at our command, in their fulness, the boundless treasures of His mercy, and graciously invites us to come and enrich ourselves with them. He feeds His redeemed ones, not with earthly bread, but with "the Bread of God, which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world" (John vi. 33).

Rejoicing through Joseph's providence to have escaped starvation, the people said to him, "Our salvation is in thy hand; let our lord only look graciously upon us, and we will joyfully serve the king." So should we from our innermost hearts say to our Redeemer, "Our salvation is in Thy hand. If Thou wilt forget our transgressions, and receive us in Thy mercy, then will we consecrate our whole lives with joy to God's service."

(5.) Up to this point Joseph is a type of the Messiah, in

His relationship to the whole human race; what follows has reference to the conduct of the Jewish people in their rejection of Jesus Christ.

In consequence of the famine which had arisen, Joseph's brothers began to be in want. They supposed him to be dead, or at any rate to have quite forgotten them; but he was at that time at the summit of his power and glory, and, notwithstanding what had passed, still loved them tenderly.

Driven by hunger, they came to him to buy wheat. They failed to recognise him, though they stood face to face with him, and heard his voice.

When he made himself known to them, they were seized with terror at the remembrance of their shameful and treacherous conduct towards him. But Joseph comforted them, saying, "Fear not; can we strive against the will of God? You meant badly by me, but God turned it to good, so that He raised me up as you see, and saved many people."

He seated them at his table, gave them rich presents, filling their hearts with gladness, and then invited them to come and dwell with him in the land of Egypt.

Whilst that Jesus Christ has already entered into possession of His heavenly kingdom, and receives, as the King of glory, the adoration of the countless nations whom He has enriched with the gifts of His grace, the Jews, His brethren after the flesh, languish in the extremest spiritual need. Because they rejected the Messiah, there is none to break to them the Bread of Life, or to announce to them God's word.

But Jesus Christ yet continues to love them for their fathers' sake, and patiently tarries for their conversion. Notwithstanding that the Holy Scriptures, which they so carefully cherish, place so plainly before their eyes the image of the Saviour, and speak of Him so much and so gloriously, yet He is, in truth, strange to them; they know Him not. And when at last the scales shall fall from their eyes, and

they shall recognise their Messiah in Christ, whom they crucified, then they will be seized with terror at their evil deed. But He, the Redeemer, will receive them with the tenderest love, will forgive them their injury towards Him, and will comfort them, saying as once St. Peter did, "Brethren, I know that you did it through ignorance. . . . But those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ should suffer, He hath so fulfilled" (Acts iii. 17, 18), that so He might "enter into His glory" (Luke xxiv. 26). And then, here below, they will have part in the graces and blessings of salvation; and hereafter in the heavenly glory, the unspeakable blessedness of Jesus Christ.

"At Joseph's invitation, Jacob, with all his house, came to Egypt and settled there. Before his death he uttered, in presence of his family, the remarkable prophecy, that 'the sceptre (the government) should not depart from the tribe of his son Juda, until He should come that was to be sent, the expectation of nations' (Gen. xlix. 10). And it was indeed the case, that Christ, the Divinely-sent Messiah, was not born until a stranger (Herod) was seated on the throne of the kings of Juda."

The possession of Chanaan had many times been solemnly promised by God to the Israelites. But in order that the land, when they took possession of it, might be a worthy dwelling-place for the children of God (Wisd. xii. 7), the destruction of the impious inhabitants was needful.

And as God had before punished by water and by fire the wickedness of men, so He now determined for their crimes to deliver over to the sword the Chanaanites, of whom the Book of Wisdom speaks as "those merciless murderers of their own children," whom they offered to Moloch (Wisd. xii. 5). But four hundred years were to intervene between the promise made to Abraham and the execution of God's sentence upon them; for, as the Scripture says, "The Lord willed to punish them with so great deliberation, giving them time and place whereby they might be changed from their wickedness." Meanwhile, to shield the Israelites from the danger of falling into idolatry, through intercourse and

marriages with the Chanaanites, God had assigned to them Egypt as a temporary dwelling-place.

The journey of Jacob into Egypt on Joseph's invitation, was ordered by Divine Providence; God Himself commanded him to go down there, and promised that He would bring him back from thence a great people.

Comforted and rejoiced by his long-lost son, the sorely-tried patriarch spent the last seventeen years of his life happily in Gessen, a beautiful and fruitful land, which Pharaoh had granted to him and to his children. When, full of years, he felt his death approaching, he called Joseph to him and blessed his two sons, giving them equal rights of inheritance with his own children. In so doing he intentionally preferred Ephraim, the younger, before his brother Manasses.

In Manasses, whose name signifies "forgotten," the Fathers see typified the Jews, who rejected the Messias, and were forgotten of God.

In Ephraim, on the contrary, they discern the image of the wide-reaching Church of Christ, which, enriched with all graces and virtues, fills the place of the once chosen people.

Then Jacob assembled round him his other sons, gave to each a father's blessing, and, enlightened by the Holy Ghost, discovered to them their future destiny. It was not either of the three eldest who received the greatest blessing. Reuben, Simeon, and Levi had all gravely sinned, and thereby caused their father the deepest grief. It was to Juda, the fourth, that it came. "Juda," his father said, speaking by God's inspiration, "thee shall thy brethren praise: thy hands shall be on the necks of thy enemies: the sons of thy father shall bow down to thee. Juda is a lion's whelp: . . . who shall rouse him? The sceptre shall not be taken away from Juda, nor a ruler from his thigh, till He come that is to be sent, and He shall be the expectation of nations." He, the expectation of nations, is none other than the Saviour Jesus Christ. Descended from Juda according to the flesh, He is worshipped and adored of heaven and

earth; victorious like a lion, He has triumphed over death and hell, and is called therefore in the Apocalypse, "the Lion of the tribe of Juda." Neither was it until the sceptre had been wrested from the possession of His tribe by the stranger Herod, that He Himself appeared upon earth (Expl., part ii. 160 or 163).

The Egyptians mourned for Jacob's death seventy days, and when the time of mourning was over, Joseph and his brethren, with the officers of Pharaoh's court, and the chief men of the land, went into the land of Chanaan to lay their father's body in the grave of Abraham and Isaac, as he had commanded them before his death.

REVIEW OF THE HISTORY FROM ADAM TO MOSES.

ITS TRUTH SUPPORTED BY NATIONAL TRADITIONS—THEIR CONSEQUENT IMPORTANCE.

We have now reached the close of the first period of religious history—a history extending backward into the dimmest twilight of antiquity, even to the very beginning of time. Its truth is vouched for, by records the most ancient and venerable. No other national history, whether Greek, Roman, Chinese, Chaldean, Indian, or Egyptian, can compare with the Hebrew, either in age, or in the intrinsic merit, truth, or significance of its contents.

Amongst all the written documents which treat of the earliest history of the world, that of Moses is the only one which extends itself unbroken from the beginning to the writer's own day—the only one which, written as it was under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, finds support both in the memorials of antiquity and the results of scientific research.¹ And it is not only the

¹ "This ancient and venerable record," says Fichte (*Naturrecht.*, part i. p. 32), "is full of the deepest and loftiest wisdom, and its results are those to which all philosophies must at last return." "Moses," the Count de Las Casas says (*Atlas Historique*), "presides over generations and centuries like an imperishable pillar of truth;" and Roux Lavergne, "The natural sciences cannot do otherwise than contend for the honour of bearing witness to the Mosaic narrative."

learning of all nations which bears witness to the truth of the Mosaic history. If we question the heathen tribes of ancient and modern times on the earliest events of the world's history, if we compare their traditions, and sift them clear of the fables with which they have become mixed, we then find we have the principal features of the Mosaic record—the unity of God, the creation of the world, Paradise, the fall, the promise of a Redeemer, the fratricide of Cain, the evil race of giants, the deluge, the building of the tower of Babel, the confusion of tongues, and the scattering of the nations.¹ What is the cause of this unanimity? It cannot be merely a coincidence of dreams. It must be owing either to the truth of the events so recorded, or to a primitive revelation handed down age after age from father to son. It is impossible that tribes so numerous, and separated from each other as widely as the four winds can part them, should have all hit by chance on the same fables and imaginations.

Thus, to bring forward an instance of what we have been saying, we find everywhere traces of a primitive belief in one God, from whom all things have their being. "It is," says Aristotle, "an old traditional saying among all men, that all things are from God, and that they exist through God."

So, too, amongst many nations, both of the Old and New Worlds, we find the tradition that the first man was formed out of earth, and that the woman was made from one of his bones—that the golden age was spent by men in a beautiful garden, but that in consequence of a transgression they fell into the indescribable misery of the age of iron.

As has been already said, in the most ancient traditions we find everywhere the same events recorded. Everywhere we meet with the woman as the man's seducer, with the temptation of the demon-serpent, the tasting of the forbidden fruit, the desire of knowledge as the source of sin, the banishment from Paradise as its punishment, and the curse which from birth to death weighs on every child of man.

All this we meet with in the heathen traditions, altered and defaced it may be, but still unmistakably recognisable. We encounter also prophecies, that after a long time, when wicked-

¹ S. Lüken, "The Traditions of the Human Race." Such traditions can, of course, refer only to such events in the world's history as took place before the dispersion of mankind.

ness should have attained its greatest height, the iron age would come to a close—that a wise and mighty hero-king, sprung from the seed of the first woman, but of heavenly origin also, would appear, and would trample on the head of the demon-serpent, and inaugurate a new age of happiness and innocence like the first. There is hardly a tribe, moreover, that does not preserve among its traditions some recollection of the deluge. Medals were struck in commemoration of it by the Phrygians, of which a quantity have been lately discovered. We find, too, the several circumstances connected with it, in the traditions of other nations.

Thus the Babylonians say, that the ark safely reposed after the falling of the waters, upon the summit of a mountain in Armenia ; and the Indian “*Saga*” tells us that before the coming of the flood, the Lord of the universe warned the pious king who had found favour in His eyes, bidding him take with him all kinds of herbs and seeds, and, accompanied by seven saints and by pairs of the irrational animals, to go into the great ark ; and that “when the flood was over these eight people came out of the ship and prayed to God.” The ancient Celts believed their ancestor, who had survived the inundation, to have been a “husbandman and the inventor of wine.” Numerous American tribes say that various animals were sent forth from the ark to try whether the waters had withdrawn. Many evidences, too, of the truth of the story of the tower of Babel, the confusion of tongues, and the dispersion of the nations, may be collected from the prehistoric records of the Old and New Worlds.

But it is not the truth only, but the deep significance of the events of which we have been speaking, that we should keep in view. The Scripture history from Adam to Moses is the account of the earliest revelation of God to man, and is thus the original foundation of Christianity. In it we see God conversing with man, making a solemn covenant with him, and promising to him a Saviour and Redeemer in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. The peop from whom this Redeemer is to proceed is already chosen, and the time of His appearance indicated. We see Him already, darkly as in a glass ; in Adam, as the forefather of a new race ; in Abel, innocent and murdered ; in Noe, saving the world from ruin ; in Melchisedech, the high priest ; in Isaac, the willing victim ; in Joseph, betrayed and persecuted at first, and then glorified and invoked as the world’s Saviour. Trust-

ing in God's promises, the patriarchs wandered upon earth as strangers and pilgrims, and so reached their eternal home. Despising the Divine word, the heathen nations walked in their own ways towards eternal loss. The way of salvation was revealed to man from the earliest times, and is none other than the belief in God, and in Him whom He has sent into the world. Thus Jesus Christ says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh to the Father but by me" (John xiv. 6).

II.

FROM MOSES TO CHRIST.

SECTION IX.

THE CALL AND MIRACULOUS GIFTS OF MOSES—THE PASCHAL LAMB.

“After Joseph’s death the Israelites became a great people, but were forced to endure a most severe slavery by the Egyptians, until God appeared to Moses as a flame of fire in the midst of a bush, and imposed on him the task of leading the children of Israel back to Canaan” (1500 B.C.).

“THE children of Israel increased,” says the Scripture (Exod. i. 7), “and sprung up into multitudes, and growing exceedingly strong they filled the land” of Gessen. This extraordinary increase of a strange people, that within a few hundred years grew into a nation numbering two and a half million souls (counting, as it did at its departure from Egypt, six hundred thousand men capable of bearing arms), filled the new King Pharaoh and his whole country with fear. Prompted by a shortsighted zeal for the safety and splendour of his throne, he conceived the cruel idea of forcibly subjugating by harsh treatment and oppression, a people so visibly blessed by God. To this end he condemned the Israelites to work in a body at the public buildings, and loaded them with unheard-of burthens. Pitiless taskmasters drove the unfortunate people to their work; and in order more surely to destroy their power, Pharaoh gave a command that all their newly-born male children should be cast into the Nile. Their groans and cries for help resounded throughout all the land, but their torments continued. There was no justice in Egypt for Israel, smarting under the oppression of a tyrant;

there was none who would lighten his bonds. This great misery fell by Divine permission upon the children of Abraham, that they might the more gladly serve the God of their fathers and their own merciful Deliverer; and that we Christians also might see from this weak image, how unendurable and fearful the thralldom of Satan must be, into which we have been cast by sin, and from which Jesus Christ has saved us. This is what St. Paul means by saying (1 Cor. x. 6), "These things were done in a figure of us," *i.e.*, to show us the provisions made by God for our salvation.

The Most High took pity upon mankind held in bondage by Satan, and sent them a Redeemer in the fulness of time. So, too, fifteen hundred years before, He raised up a deliverer for Israel from the slavery of the tyrant Pharaoh. For this great work, Moses, of the tribe of Levi, was chosen by the Lord. From his earliest years we see in him many striking points of likeness to the Saviour of the world. (1.) By a decree of the wicked Herod, all the infant boys in and around Bethlehem were condemned to death. Through a Divine dispensation the Saviour alone escaped. And thus, too, Moses was miraculously saved from perishing in the waters of the Nile, to which fate all the new-born Israelite boys had been doomed by Pharaoh. (2.) As the splendour of His heavenly throne did not deter Christ from coming down upon earth, and taking upon Himself for love of man the bitterest humiliation and sorrow; so neither was Moses prevented by the magnificence and riches of the Egyptian court, in the midst of which he had been brought up, from sharing the lot of his persecuted, despised, and downtrodden brethren. St. Paul accords to him the great praise, that "by faith Moses, when he was grown up, denied himself to be the son of Pharaoh's daughter; rather choosing to be afflicted with the people of God, than to have the pleasure of sin for a time; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasure of the Egyptians: for he looked unto the reward." (3.) Like Christ, Moses also came unto his own, and "thought," as St. Stephen bears witness, "that his brethren understood that God by his hand

would save them: but they understood it not;" and, unrecognised by them, he wandered forth into the land of Madian, where for forty years he kept the sheep of Jethro, his father-in-law. (4.) The Incarnate Son of God emerges from the shadow of His hidden life, full of divine wisdom and armed with miraculous power, in order to the accomplishment of His work—the salvation of mankind. Moses comes forth from his concealment in the desert, and goes down into Egypt, to fulfil the mission which Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, intrusted to him when He spoke to him from the burning bush. Knowing his own weakness, he would have prayed to be freed from the task; but he is gifted by the Most High with great wisdom and with the power to do mighty signs and wonders with his staff before Pharaoh and all Egypt, in such manner that the Lord said to him, "Behold, I have appointed thee the God of Pharaoh" (Exod. vii. 1). His power, however, was not, like that of the Redeemer, unlimited. Moses was set over King Pharaoh merely, whilst Christ is the "King of kings and Lord of Lords" (Apoc. xix. 16); "Who is over all things, God blessed for ever" (Rom. ix. 5).

"But Pharaoh, king of Egypt, would not let the Israelites depart, and therefore the Most High sent fearful plagues over Egypt, and last of all an angel, who slew all the first-born sons of the Egyptians in one night."

Moses, with his brother Aaron, went, as the Lord had told him, to the king, and made known to him the divine command, that he should lead the people of Israel into the desert, and there let them sacrifice to their Lord. But, instead of obeying the Lord of Hosts, Pharaoh hardened his heart, "Who is the Lord," he exclaimed in defiance, "that I should hear His voice, and let Israel depart? I know the Lord not." But who the Lord was, Pharaoh and all Egypt were now to be taught.

The staff of Moses was changed, at His word, into a serpent; and by the stretching forth of this same miraculous staff, all the waters of Egypt were turned into blood; the whole land was then covered with frogs; countless swarms of lice rose

from the dust of the earth, tormenting man and beast; the evil magicians here owned their impotence, and cried, "This is the finger of God!" Pharaoh alone remained stubborn. Horrible swarms of flies now appeared; a malignant murrain attacked the cattle; boils and blains broke forth among the Egyptians; a terrible hailstorm, with thunder and lightning, destroyed every living thing that was in the fields; swarms of locusts reduced Egypt to a desert; and its inhabitants were terrified by three days of a fearful darkness. But whenever, at the prayer of Moses, the plagues ceased, Pharaoh's heart became harder than before. The tenth, and most dreadful of all, could alone melt his obstinacy. The Lord said to Moses, "At midnight shall I (through My angel) pass through Egypt, and all the first-born shall die in the land of the Egyptians, from the first-born of Pharaoh, who sits on the throne, to the first-born of the maid-servant. . . . And there shall be a great cry throughout the land of Egypt, of which the like was never heard before, nor shall be again." And so it befell.

"The destroying angel did not, however, approach the houses of the Israelites, because they had sprinkled their door-posts with the blood of the Pascal lamb, which they ate that night by God's command."

When God announced to Moses that He would visit Egypt by the destroying angel, He made known also to him how the chosen people were to protect themselves from this terrible visitation. The Lord spoke to Moses (Exod. xii. 3-13, and 43-46), "On the tenth day of this month, let every man take a lamb by their families and houses. . . . And it shall be a lamb without blemish, a male of one year. And you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; and the whole multitude of the children of Israel shall sacrifice it in the evening. And they shall take of the blood thereof, and put it upon both the side-posts, and upon the upper door-posts of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh that night roasted at the fire, and unleavened bread with wild lettuce. . . . The stranger . . . shall not eat thereof . . . neither shall you break a

bone thereof. . . . And thus you shall eat it: you shall gird your reins, and you shall have shoes on your feet, holding staves in your hands, and you shall eat in haste. For it is the Phase (that is, the Passage) of the Lord. And I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and will kill every first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the Lord. And the blood shall be unto you for a sign in the houses where you shall be; and I shall see the blood and shall pass over you: and the plague shall not be upon you, to destroy you." The lamb of sacrifice, the Paschal lamb, as it was called, together with the ceremonies with which it was to be killed and eaten, is a clear and unmistakable type of Jesus Christ, who was sacrificed for us once upon the cross, and gives Himself to us in the heavenly banquet of the blessed Eucharist. To this the Holy Scriptures bear witness. St. John the Baptist calls Christ the "Lamb of God;" St. Paul expressly says of Him, "Christ our pasch is sacrificed" (1 Cor. v. 7). In the Apocalypse Christ is represented to us as the Lamb that was slain, through whose blood Satan has been overcome, and in which we ourselves are washed clean from the stain of sin.¹ The likeness between the typical lamb and the Divine Lamb of God appears especially in the following points:—

(1.) The lamb to be sacrificed was to be of the first year, thus representing the flower of life, in which Christ was slain.

(2.) A lamb without spot was to be chosen, denoting thus Jesus, the "lamb unspotted and undefiled" (1 Pet. i. 19).

(3.) The Paschal lamb was to be sought out on the tenth day of the month, and the Pasch was to be solemnised on the evening of the fourteenth day. So, too, it was on the

¹ The words of St. John (x. x. 36) should suffice to set all doubts at rest regarding the typical signification of the Jewish Paschal lamb. What other end could the sprinkling with blood have served. "Was it, think you," St. Justin asks with reason (*Gespr. mit. Tryph.*, n. 111) "that God might perhaps have made a mistake, as He passed by to smite the Egyptians, if the sign had not been put on the door-posts?"

tenth day that Christ, as the Paschal Lamb which is offered for us, entered Jerusalem, and on the evening of the fourteenth day that He celebrated, with His disciples, the feast of the same divine offering.

(4.) All the blood of the lamb was to be sprinkled on the doors, its flesh was to be roasted at the fire, and no bone of it was to be broken. The Saviour, too, shed forth all His precious blood; the fire of intense agony penetrated throughout His most sacred body, and, as St. John the evangelist says expressly, "that the Scriptures might be fulfilled," no bone of Him was broken, although, according to custom, the contrary was the case with the two thieves who were crucified with Him.

(5.) Only the houses of the Israelites whose doors were signed with the blood of the lamb were saved from death. Neither can any escape eternal death, except through the merits of the bitter passion and precious blood of Jesus Christ.

(6.) The Jewish Paschal lamb was eaten only in the dwellings of the Jewish families; and so, too, it is in the Catholic Church only, the true family of the Heavenly Father, that the Lamb of God, the Incarnate Word, is communicated to the faithful. Whosoever does not belong to this family is shut out from the divine banquet.

(7.) The unleavened bread should signify the innocence and purity, and the bitter lettuce the mortification of the flesh and compunction of heart, which Christians should bring to this holy feast.

(8.) The Israelites were commanded to eat the Paschal lamb in haste, and equipped as though for a journey. This was in token that we should approach the holy table with hearts detached from the goods and joys of this world, and with our thoughts and affections fixed on heaven, the true and eternal home which awaits us after our earthly pilgrimage. In remembrance of, and as a perpetual thanksgiving for, their miraculous deliverance, all Israel was commanded yearly to celebrate the Pasch, and to consecrate

from thenceforth every first-born of man and beast to the Lord.

Herein we see the pressing obligation which lies upon us Christians, who have received the far greater mercy of redemption from eternal death, never to let this infinite benefit vanish from our remembrance, but to consecrate, as in gratitude we are bound, our whole lives to God, that, as a sacrifice well pleasing in His sight, they may be spent from henceforth in His honour.

SECTION X.

THE PASSAGE OF THE RED SEA BY THE ISRAELITES.

“Upon this, Pharaoh let the Israelites depart. Soon, however, it repented him that he had done so. He hastily assembled his forces, and set off after the unarmed fugitives. Full of terror and alarm they cried to God for help. At the Lord’s behest, Moses stretched out his rod over the Red Sea, and lo, the sea opened before them. The water stood up like walls to the right hand and to the left, and they walked through it with dry feet. Pharaoh hastened after them in wrath into the midst of the sea; then when Moses stretched forth his rod again over them, the waves suddenly closed, and buried Pharaoh with all his host.”

THE blood of the Paschal lamb points to our redemption through the blood of Jesus Christ; and in like manner the passage of the Red Sea strikingly symbolises the grace of holy Baptism. If the Israelites had not passed through the Red Sea, they would even after the celebration of the Pasch have remained under the yoke of Pharaoh as before; and so the sacrifice of the Divine Lamb for our redemption would not have sufficed to free us from the slavery of Satan, under which original sin had cast us, were it not for our also receiving the grace of Baptism. That the passage through the Red Sea is beyond all doubt an image of holy Baptism is shown by St. Paul’s words to the Corinthians: “For I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that . . . our fathers all in Moses were baptized, in the cloud, and in the sea,” *i.e.*, that

they received the baptism of Christ in a symbolical manner. According to the Fathers of the Church, Moses typifies our Divine Saviour, his rod the cross, Pharaoh the devil, the cloud the Holy Ghost, and the sea, baptism.¹ "Moses," says St. Augustine (sup. Ps. lxxii.), "frees the enslaved people from the hands of the Egyptians, and our Lord Jesus Christ frees us from the thralldom of sin. Israel passes through the Red Sea, and we pass through the waters of holy Baptism; and as the Red Sea engulphs all their enemies, so baptism washes away all our sins," and thereby frees us from the servitude of the devil, "whose empire over us is founded only upon our sins." "And mark well, most beloved brethren," says the same Father in another place,² "that the people of God did not escape the power of Pharaoh until the staff was stretched forth over the sea; and even so, the Christian people were lost for ever, had not the holy cross been set up on high." It is indeed the holy cross that gives to the water its mysterious power to do away with sin, and to conquer the devil. In the cloud, too, which went before the Israelites in their passage through the sea, we discern, with good reason, the Holy Spirit. We are justified in so doing, by the expression of which our Lord makes use, with reference to baptism, *i.e.*, "of water and the Holy Ghost" (John iii. 5), and also by St. Paul's words above quoted, where he says that the Israelites "were baptized in the cloud, and in the sea." Thus, then, as the pillar of cloud tempered the burning heat of the sun by day, and enlightened the night with its brightness, so does the Holy Ghost, whose grace is poured upon us in baptism, cool the fire of concupiscence, and light us along the dark path of our life here below.

To complete the analogy between the type and the anti-type, we have yet to notice that as God brought the children of Israel "out of the house of bondage" (Deut. v. 6) entirely through His own free love and compassion, so, also, it is by His unmerited grace and mercy alone that we are saved by

¹ See Theodoret, 2 Gen. Fr. 27.

² See Appendix, Rede (?) 24, which has also been ascribed to Origen.

baptism from eternal death. For, as the Apostle says, "Not by the works of justice, which we have done; but according to His mercy He saved us, in the laver of regeneration, and renovation of the Holy Ghost" (Tit. iii. 5). May we never more fall back under the thralldom of sin, from which we have been redeemed, but preserve faithfully till death the inestimable grace of holy Baptism! Then we, too, shall one day join before the throne of the Lamb, in that heavenly canticle, which the hosts of the blessed, who have overcome the enemy of their salvation, sing to the Lord for ever and ever. For as Moses and the children of Israel, when they had seen the downfall of Pharaoh and his hosts, broke forth and sung, "Let us sing to the Lord, for He is gloriously magnified; the horse and the rider He hath thrown into the sea" (Exod. xv. 1), so, too, did St. John hear the victorious choirs of the blessed in heaven singing to the harps of God "the canticle of Moses, the servant of God, and the canticle of the Lamb, and saying, Great and wonderful are Thy works, O God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, O King of ages. Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and magnify Thy name?" (Apoc. xv. 2, 3).

SECTION XI.

JOURNEY OF THE ISRAELITES THROUGH THE DESERT—THE PILLAR OF THE CLOUD—THE BITTER WATERS—MANNA—THE WATER FROM THE ROCK—THE VICTORY OVER THE AMALECITES—THE GIVING OF THE LAW ON MOUNT SINAI—THE ESTABLISHING OF THE COVENANT—MEANING OF THE CEREMONIAL LAWS, ESPECIALLY OF THE SACRIFICES AND OF THE FEAST OF THE ATONEMENT—IDOLATRY OF THE ISRAELITES—INTERCESSION OF MOSES.

"The children of Israel now passed through a great desert, and came to the mountain of Sinai."

God had led His people with a strong hand out of Egypt, and had triumphed over its godless inhabitants; but they

could not at once take possession of the beautiful land which had been promised to them so many centuries before.

It was needful that they should first, through many trials and privations, traverse the barren desert of Arabia, which lies between Egypt and Palestine. The Fathers are unanimous in regarding this journey as a type of that pilgrimage upon earth, which we begin at our baptism, and must continue through many trials and sufferings until we reach our longed-for home in heaven. All those things, too, that befell the chosen people during their wanderings represent in a figure the spiritual struggles of the Church in her progress towards her promised land, the kingdom of heaven. St. Augustine expresses this idea as follows, in his Commentary on the 72d Psalm:—"All things, brethren, that this people underwent in the desert, and all that God did for them; all their chastisements and all their graces, were symbolical of all those things, that, whether for trial or consolation, befall us who walk with Christ in the desert of this life, striving after our home."

The benefits which the Israelites received from God during their journey are such as give striking confirmation to these words of the holy doctor.

Throughout this huge and unpeopled waste of sand, where there was neither road nor track to point their way, the children of Israel were continually preceded by that pillar of cloud and of fire, which had guided them across the Red Sea. And so, too, as long as we remain united to the Church of Christ, the Holy Spirit, whom we received at our baptism, will be our Guide and Protector through our difficult and dangerous journey towards heaven, teaching us how we may avoid false paths and threatening precipices, and conducting us surely to our wished-for goal.

When the children of Israel, after a three days' journey in the waterless desert, were parched with drought, they came to the waters of Mara. But these waters, instead of affording refreshment to their burning thirst, proved so bitter that they could not drink them. To help them in their

great need, Moses, at the command of the Lord, cast a tree into the waters, and they became sweet. The Fathers see in this tree the power of the cross of Christ, which sweetens all the bitterness of this life.

St. Gregory of Nyssa very beautifully says, "To him who has renounced the sensual delights of Egypt, to which he was formerly enthralled, life bereft of these seems sad and bitter; but when the wood touches the water, as soon, that is, as the Saviour's cross is imprinted upon the soul, such a life becomes, through the grace of Christ, sweeter and more pleasant than all the joys and delights of this world."

When in the wilderness the people began to suffer from want of bread, and murmured against Moses and against the Lord, God promised to them that upon the morrow He would give them bread in abundance. And in the morning the Israelites did indeed see the ground covered with manna as with hoar-frost. They hastened to collect this heavenly bread, and they ate it and were filled. This, however, was but a type of the true and living bread from heaven, which we were to receive first from the Divine Saviour of the world. For this cause Jesus said to the Jews, "Moses gave you not bread from heaven," but I give you "the true bread from heaven;" that is, "my flesh, for the life of the world." The manna is in various ways a type of the divine bread from heaven, the most holy Sacrament of the Altar.

(1.) The manna was daily rained down from heaven upon the earth; and Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Son of God, descends daily from heaven upon our altars to become, under the form of bread, the nourishment of our souls.

(2.) The manna was not given to the Israelites until after they had passed through the Red Sea, and were journeying through the wilderness towards the Promised Land. The holy Eucharist, too, is given only to those who have received baptism, and are journeying through the wilderness of this life towards their heavenly country.

(3.) The manna supported natural life in the Israelites, but it is the supernatural life that is maintained and strengthened

by the most holy Sacrament; and, whereas, the manna was no preservative against death, this heavenly manna, on the other hand, nourishes our souls to everlasting life, and implants within us the seed of immortality. As Christ expressly says, "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up in the last day."

(4.) The sustaining properties of the manna lasted so long as its outward form remained. And so, while the accidents are preserved, our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, remains present in the most holy Sacrament of the Altar.

(5.) There was also with regard to the manna this miraculous circumstance, that however much or however little each one collected, it was found, on measuring, to be neither more nor less than the prescribed quantity. And so, too, in Holy Communion the same is alike received by all—Christ, namely, whole and entire, with His divinity and humanity. The Holy Scripture describes the manna as the "food of angels, . . . having in it all that is delicious, and the sweetness of every taste," and which "showed" God's "sweetness to His children" (Wisd. xvi. 20, 21). Who does not see in how perfect a manner all this applies to the Blessed Sacrament, containing as it does within itself the living spring of every blessing and grace, and the fulness of the most sweet consolation and joy; and being, as it is, the proof through which God makes known to us the tenderness of His overwhelming love.

And the livelier the faith, the more confident the hope, and the more ardent and tender the love with which we approach this most excellent Sacrament, the more abundantly we shall participate in these glorious privileges, and the more precious will be the fruits of piety which they will produce within us.

(6.) Just as the carnal-minded Jews, who, lusting after the flesh-pots of Egypt, complained against the manna, saying, "Our soul now loatheth this very light food" (Num. xxi. 5), there are many Christians who, knowing no other joys than the intoxicating delights of the world, and no happiness but

the transitory pleasures of this life, are very far, in receiving Holy Communion, from tasting its heavenly sweetness. This divine manna has become to them but a weariness and a disgust.

Christ, in His infinite goodness, has promised to give us not living bread alone, but "living water" also. "To him that thirsteth," He says, "I will give of the fountain of the water of life, freely" (Apoc. xxi. 6). "If any man thirst, let him come to Me and drink" (John vii. 37). And in the Old Testament, we see clearly typified this divine water of grace, which flows towards eternal life. When, at Mount Horeb, the Israelites, being in want of water, broke forth into sinful murmurings and anger against Moses, he, at God's command, struck the rock with his rod, and thereupon a plentiful stream of water flowed forth from it, and satisfied the thirsty people. St. Paul tells us clearly that "the rock was Christ" (1 Cor. x. 4), that is to say, it *prefigured* Christ. The water which flowed from the rock he calls a "spiritual drink," from "the spiritual rock;" because the water, like the rock, bore a mystical signification. This water represents the various graces and gifts of the Holy Spirit, which, through the merits of Jesus Christ, are imparted to us, not through Holy Communion alone, but also through the rest of the holy Sacraments, and from many other sources besides. Of this "Rock, which was Christ," the Apostle says further that it *followed* the Israelites. He does not mean by this, however, to support the Rabbinical tradition, that the material rock miraculously followed them throughout their whole journey, and supplied them with water; but to correct it rather, and to explain that it was the Saviour, prefigured by the rock, who accompanied them, supplying them with grace and strength, and so enabling them to work out their salvation, and to reach their heavenly home, of which Chanaan was but a figure.¹

¹ The rock which Moses struck may yet be seen in the place pointed out by Scripture, and it still bears, according to the testimony of unimpeachable witnesses, ineffaceable traces of the miracle. A detailed description may be found in Mislin's "Die heiligen Orte" (vol. iii. p. 193). This is not the only

In journeying towards our heavenly home, we have not only many troubles to undergo, but many battles to fight also, with the countless enemies of our souls. A beautiful example of how such conquests are to be achieved, is afforded to us by the victory of the Israelites over the Amalecites (Exod. xvii.; Deut. xxv. 18). When these savage descendants of Esau fell upon the unarmed rear of the Israelitish host, Moses sent to them Josue, with chosen warriors. He himself, with the rod of God in his hand, ascended to the summit of a hill, and prayed with his hands lifted up towards heaven, whilst Josue fought below. In this attitude he was obliged to remain; for whenever his arms fell from weariness, then Amalec prevailed. Aaron and Hur therefore sustained his hands on either side, and so the great victory was won. Speaking of this passage, St. Justin asks the Jews (*Gespr. mit Tryphon.*, n. 18), "Who of you is there but knows that prayers made with sighs and tears, on bended knees, or with prostrate body, gain special acceptance with God?" Now, whence came it that the prayer of Moses, which he made thus with outstretched arms, was of such power? The reason, according to the Fathers, is that so Moses was a type of Jesus Christ, who, with his arms stretched out upon the cross, offered up for us upon Golgotha those fervent prayers and supplications that were heard on our behalf (Heb. v. 7). Praying and suffering on the cross the Divine Redeemer triumphed over sin, death, and hell; and it is only through faith in Him that we can hope for victory. Through this faith it was, as the Apostle of the Gentiles tells us, that the heroes of the Old Covenant "became valiant in battle, put to flight the armies of foreigners" (Heb. xi. 34). And through this faith it is also that the Church of the New Covenant has already been

monument in Palestine which bears witness to the divine revelation. The above learned writer, who travelled through the whole of Palestine, says, p. 270, "Just as there is not a blade of grass that does not speak of the power of God, so there is not a spot in Palestine that does not bear witness to the veracity of our holy books."

victorious over foes so many and so fierce, and that she will for ever march on, from one conquest to another, until the end of time. And by this faith, too, it is that we alone can overcome the enemies of our salvation. St. John says (1st Epist. v. 4), "And this is the victory that overcometh the world, our faith." And "who is he that overcometh the world, but he who believeth that Jesus (the Crucified) is the Son of God?" For by this faith we are armed with weapons which enable us to conquer sin itself, and all that can lead us to sin. In this faith, we must not only pray with Moses, but also fight with Josue. For if Moses had not prayed upon the mountain, Josue had fought in vain; and if Josue had not fought in the valley, then the prayer of Moses could never have led to victory. Both arms are needful in our warfare against the enemy of our souls. In faith in the Crucified we must both fight and pray. The Gospel shows us this, and not the Gospel only, for everywhere in the Mosaic record also we find Christ pointed out. He it is who guides us by His Holy Spirit along the painful path towards heaven, sweetening all bitterness through His cross. He it is who is our true strengthening bread from heaven, our miraculous spring of refreshing grace, our shield in battle, and our sure pledge of victory.

"On Mount Sinai, amidst thunder and lightning, God gave the children of Israel the ten commandments, written upon two tables of stone; renewed the covenant which He had made with their fathers; and ordered their religious and civil life by means of most beneficent laws."

Fifty days had elapsed since the Israelites had been freed from the yoke of slavery, when God, who had already done for them so many wonders, proclaimed to them, from Sinai, the law by which their lives were thenceforward to be regulated. And thus, too, fifty days after Christ's resurrection, through which the great work of our redemption from the slavery of Satan was accomplished, the Holy Ghost descended upon the Church at Jerusalem, to promulgate the gracious law of the new covenant—that law which we must all observe in order to enter into eternal life. It was on Sinai

that the law of fear was given. On Sinai Jehovah descended with the signs of His terrible majesty. The dark cloud which veiled the mountain, the bright lightning, the rolling of the thunder, and the sound of the trumpets, spread terror and dismay among the people. But it was quite otherwise that the new law was proclaimed at Jerusalem. This new law is the law of love, and through the power of love is to overcome the world. The house, indeed, where the apostles were was filled with a mighty wind, but it was not a storm that would inspire terror, but a rushing noise such as would raise wonder and attract a curious multitude. The Holy Ghost, indeed, appeared in the form of flame; but it was a flame that filled with heavenly comfort, inspiring joy and holy exultation. On Sinai the law of fear was promulgated to the people of Israel alone; whereas, in Jerusalem, the law of the new covenant was given for all nations of the earth. God had decreed that men from "every nation under heaven" should be at the feast. Filled with the Holy Ghost, the apostles spoke to all of these, to each in his own tongue, the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and in the power of the same Spirit they went forth to all parts of the earth, to make known the law and the blessings of the new covenant to every creature, and to confirm their words by the most astounding miracles.

Besides the ten commandments, and the precepts connected with them, God gave many other laws from Sinai to the Israelites, in part religious, referring to their divine worship (the ceremonial law), and in part political and civil, having regard to the common weal, and setting forth the first principles of public and private justice. In the ten commandments are contained that natural moral law, which is founded on human nature, deeply impressed by God upon the hearts of all, and which all without exception are bound to observe. Its solemn and imposing promulgation on Mount Sinai was intended to inculcate its observance upon the Jews in the most emphatic manner. Far from annulling it, Christ has confirmed it, and prescribed its more exact fulfilment.

(Vol. iii. p. 105.) The ceremonial and political laws, on the contrary, were abrogated by the new covenant. The former, because the Jewish worship was in its nature symbolical, and served only as a preparation for the Christian; and the latter, because the Jewish state, for which they were exclusively framed, was to disappear with the commencement of the reign of the Messias.

It was God's will not only to give this law upon Sinai, but to make a solemn covenant with the whole people, as He had before done with their forefather Abraham. In virtue of this covenant He was pleased to choose Israel, from amongst all the other nations of the earth, to be to Him "a priestly kingdom and a holy nation," of which He Himself was to be Lord and King (Exod. xix. 6). The Jewish people, on their side, solemnly bound themselves to be faithful to their Heavenly King, and to observe all His commandments and ordinances. It was at the foot of Mount Sinai that this great covenant was ratified. When at God's commandment Moses had written down the law of the Lord in a book, the book of the covenant, he raised an altar and offered a burnt-offering to the Most High. Half the blood of the sacrifice he put into bowls, and the other half he poured out upon the altar. He then read the law out of the book of the covenant to the assembled people, who answered with one voice, "All things that the Lord hath spoken, we will do, we will be obedient" (Exod. xxiv. 7). Then Moses took the blood that was in the bowls, and sprinkled it over the people, saying, "This is the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you." This solemn covenant which God made through Moses with the children of Israel, as the Apostle shows us (Heb. ix.), symbolised also in a striking manner that new and glorious covenant which the Most High has made with mankind through Jesus Christ. (1.) The old covenant was sealed by the pouring out of the blood of bullocks, but the new covenant by the shedding of the precious blood of Jesus Christ upon the altar of the cross. This, our Lord Jesus Christ declared Himself at the last supper, when He said, "This is the blood of the new

testament, which shall be shed for you, and for many, unto the remission of sins." (2.) Whilst the covenant between God and Israel was made only once, Jesus Christ continually confirms His covenant with man, and renews it daily in an unbloody manner in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass until the end of time. (3.) The former covenant was only to last a certain time, and regarded only one nation; the latter has no limits either of time or space, since all men are called into it, and it will exist for ever. (4.) Inasmuch as the blood of God made Man, is immeasurably more precious than that of bullocks, so the effects and operations of the new covenant infinitely surpass those of the old; for that which the old covenant could in no wise effect, came to pass under the new. Through the new covenant sin was blotted out, earth reconciled with heaven, and not an earthly merely, but a heavenly kingdom was founded, in which the redeemed should reign with Christ in never-ending glory and blessedness. (5.) We, like the Israelites, are bound by strict and holy obligations. It is only by faithful and constant observance of the law of Christ that we can attain to the possession of those good things promised by the covenant and purchased for us by Him; and to this, when we entered through holy Baptism into the covenant, we each pledged ourselves.

Not only the covenant, but also the ceremonial law promulgated on Mount Sinai, had a mystical meaning, and referred to Christ and His Church. In Judaism, we see that form and order impressed by Christ upon the Church, foreshadowed with surprising accuracy. (1.) One only and visible Church was founded by Christ, of which He is Himself the invisible Head, whilst its visible head is Peter or his successor for the time being. So, too, before Christ, there existed but one visible divinely-appointed Synagogue,¹ of which the invisible

¹ The word *Synagogue* among the Jews has much the same meaning as *Church* with us. It means not only the place where men assemble for public worship and preaching, but the whole body of the faithful. By the name Synagogue, the Jewish high council (Synedrium) is often understood, in the same manner as by Church, we often mean to imply only the Church teaching, or that portion of the Church on which the duty of teaching devolves.

head was Jehovah, and the visible head Aaron and his successors. In Christ's Church all are not equal; there is a divinely-organised scale of authority, having as its head the Pope. In the Synagogue, also, the high priest was invested with supreme power both as judge and teacher. Beneath him were the priests, and under them the Levites, whilst the people formed the lowest grade. The Church has received from Christ the right to watch over the observance of the divine law, to punish transgressors, and finally to exclude them from her fold. Furthermore, she is empowered to institute new feasts, and to dispense with the observance of certain precepts and ordinances. Like powers were given by God to the Synagogue. (2.) In the Church Christ has instituted various sacraments. There were many such, too, in the Synagogue ordained by God Himself; such were circumcision, the eating of the Paschal lamb and of the shewbread, different rites of purification and expiation, and various ceremonies which were to be observed at the induction of the priests into their office. These could not indeed, like the Christian sacraments, impart inward sanctity to the soul, and for this reason the Apostle calls them weak and needy elements" (Gal. iv. 9). Nevertheless the name of sacraments may be given to them, in the first place, because they were the external symbols which typified beforehand the invisible grace and holiness of the sacraments of Christ; and, secondly, as conferring a certain outward purity, such as was prescribed by the law. If, for example, a man had even, unavoidably, touched a leper or a corpse, he was held to be unclean, and could not enter the temple, or eat the Paschal lamb, until he had undergone the sacramental purification prescribed in such cases. (3.) Our churches are the dwellings of the living God; in them Jesus Christ, true God and true man, is really present; and within them it is most properly, that the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is offered to the Most High. So, too, the Lord was enthroned in the Jewish temple, over the ark of the covenant; and the tabernacle first, and afterwards the temple, was the place appointed by God for the offering of the

Jewish sacrifices.¹ And as with us, the aim and centre of our whole worship is sacrifice, so, too, it was under the old covenant.

All the sacrifices of the Old Testament, bloody and unbloody alike, the burnt-offerings as well as the peace-offerings and sin-offerings, were (as has already been explained in vol. iv., in the instruction on the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass) but figures of that one most holy sacrifice of praise, thanksgiving, intercession, and propitiation, offered by the God-Man Jesus Christ for the salvation of the world; with this difference only, that the bloody sacrifices prefigured the bloody sacrifice of our Lord on the cross, and the unbloody sacrifices its unbloody renewal on our altars. This oneness of the bloody and unbloody sacrifices was already typified in the Old Testament, inasmuch that in every burnt-offering and peace-offering both were united, the unbloody and the bloody sacrifices being laid together upon the altar and consumed at the same time. The two species used in the most holy Sacrifice of the Mass were symbolised also by the bread that was consumed by fire, and the wine that was poured out at the foot of the altar. The accompanying offerings of salt, incense, and oil, likewise had reference to the sacrifice of the New Testament. By the salt was signified its incorruptibility, by the incense the sweet savour with which it ascends before God, and by the oil the power of the Holy Ghost in the mysterious transubstantiation which takes place in the Sacrifice of the Mass. It is not our task to explain all the sacrificial rites of the Old Testament; we will merely add a short notice and explanation of that most significant

¹ An introductory description of these holy places is given in Section 15, where Solomon's temple is treated of. It may here suffice to recall the words of St. Augustine (*De Civit. Dei*, lib. vii. chap. 32), "*Omnes, non solum prophetiæ, quæ in verbis sunt, nec tantum præcepta vitæ, quæ mores pietatem que formant, atque illis (Hebræorum) litteris contineatur; verum etiam sacra, sacerdotia, tabernaculum, sive templum, altaria, sacrificia, cærimonix, dies festi, et quidquid aliud ad eam servitutem pestinet, quæ Deo debetur, et græce propriè latria dicitur, ea significaverunt, et præmintiaverunt, quæ propter æternam vitam fidelium in Christo et impleta credimus, et impleri cernimus, et implenda confidimus.*" (See Stöckl, "*Die Opfer*," vol. i. 3.)

sacrifice which the high priest, after having first made offering for his own sins, offered for those of the whole people of Israel, on the solemn day of penance and atonement.

The day of atonement was solemnised yearly on the tenth day of the seventh month. A strict fast, including abstinence from drink as well as from food, was enjoined upon all Israelites of the whole country, from the evening but one before the feast, till the following sunset. Two goats of similar size and colour, were chosen as a solemn sacrifice of propitiation for the sins of the people. After the high priest had slaughtered the one upon which the lot fell, in the outer court of the temple, he put its blood into a basin, and carried it, not clothed in his usual array, but in the simple priestly robes of linen, into the holy of holies, which even he could never enter except on that day. Then he sprinkled the blood once towards the mercy-seat above the ark of the covenant, and seven times before the ark itself,¹ whilst the priests and people in the outer court prayed and implored for mercy from God. He then approached the other goat, placed both his hands upon its head, and confessed over it the sins of the whole nation, saying, "O Lord, Thy people, the house of Israel has gone astray, and has been stubborn," &c.; and then, the sins of the people having been thus laid figuratively upon the goat, it was led forth into the wilderness and there left to its fate. The flesh of the slaughtered goat might not be eaten like that of other propitiatory sacrifices, but was to be burned outside the camp or city.

This sacrifice is an especial type of the bloody sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The explanation of it is given to us by St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. ix. As the goat was slain by the Jewish high priest in the court of the

¹ The mercy-seat was a flat sheet of pure gold, placed above the ark of the covenant, and of the same length and breadth as the ark itself, and having at either end two golden cherubim. It was called the "Mercy-Seat," or "Shield of Propitiation" (propitiatorium), because from thence as from His throne God made known His will, and allowed Himself to be appeased and entreated.

temple, so the Divine High Priest, both God and man, offered once for all upon earth His own life, the great and costly sacrifice of our redemption. And as the high priest entered the holy of holies with the blood of the slain beast, that he might present it as an atonement before the Lord, so, too, it was needful that the Incarnate Son of God should ascend into heaven before the throne of the Most High, and there present to His eternal Father His own blood as the price of our redemption; that so, in consideration of the infinite satisfaction wrought by His only-begotten Son, through His obedience for man to the bloody death of the cross, God might forgive our sins, and again extend to us His love and grace. The outer court thus signified the earth, where Christ suffered; the holy of holies, heaven, which He entered; the Jewish high priest, Jesus Christ, our true High Priest; the poor robes, the human nature in which Jesus Christ offered His sacrifice; the slain goat, the same Jesus Christ, no longer as priest but as victim, who, "in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin" (Rom. viii. 3), was slain in our behalf. Again, the second goat, after the expiation had been made through the blood of the first, was charged with the sins of the people, and driven forth to the wilderness. This signifies that, by virtue of Christ's sacrifice of atonement, sin and its consequences were completely cancelled and blotted out, and banished from the human race. That the Jewish priests, instead of eating the flesh of the sacrifice, were obliged to have it burned outside the camp, means, as St. Paul shows us, that such as were still Jews might not partake of the flesh of the Divine victim, and that the sacrifice of Christ was not offered for the Synagogue merely, but for the whole world. For this cause also it was that He suffered, not in Jerusalem, but without the city.

St. Paul, who thus explains to us the hidden signification of the Feast of the Atonement, shows us in many parts of this same Epistle to the Hebrews (vii. 9, 10), how incomparably more excellent is the Divine High Priest, both God and man, than the Jewish high priest. (1.) The former was

obliged first to sacrifice for his own sins; but the latter, the holy, the innocent, the undefiled High Priest, needed not for His own sins to offer sacrifices. (2.) The Jewish high priest was only allowed to enter the holy of holies alone, and could not open it to the people; but Christ, by His own entrance, has opened the way to all, that all may follow Him whither He has gone before. (3.) The Jewish high priest entered the holy of holies through the old corruptible veil, but Christ has dedicated for us "a new living way" into heaven "through the veil," that is to say, "His flesh"—*i.e.*, through His bitter sufferings in His sacred body, which was the veil of the Godhead. (4.) The sacrifice of atonement had to be offered every year by the Jewish high priest, as being insufficient to make the comers thereunto perfect; but Christ offered sacrifice once only, "for by one oblation He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified"—this one oblation being an inexhaustible, overflowing source of grace for the redemption and salvation of the whole world. Neither did Christ ascend many times, but once for all into heaven; because He sits there for ever on the right hand of God, and has made it open for ever to us also. (5.) The Jewish high priest could enter the sanctuary with strange blood, that is to say, the blood of beasts only. It was with His own infinitely precious blood that Christ ascended into heaven. Herein, according to St. Paul, is the reason, why the sacrifices of the Old Testament were so imperfect and worthless, and why, like the sacraments of the old law, all their power to sanctify the soul and to cleanse from sin failed them; "for it is impossible," says the Apostle (Heb. x. 4), "that with the blood of oxen and goats, sins should be taken away."¹ It does not, however, by any means follow that such sacrifices were of no profit to eternal salvation; for, like prayer, fasting, alms, vows, and the like, they were, if offered with a right inten-

¹ When it is said (Heb. ix. 13) that the blood of goats and of oxen . . . sanctify such as are defiled, this is only to be understood of the external, legal cleanness, which the Mosaic sacraments conferred (p. 77). This is clearly proved by St. Paul's words, "*Sanctificat ad emundationem carnis.*"

tion, good and meritorious works; and the obedience towards God, by whom these things had been ordained and commanded, was of itself well-pleasing to Him, and therefore fruitful to salvation. Besides this, though powerless in themselves to justify or make holy, they were nevertheless in a certain sense great helps towards justification, in that they excited and nourished pious affections in the minds of the offerers, specially that of a consciousness of their own guilt, and of their need of a Saviour—a longing for the Messiah—faith, hope, contrition, love, and resignation to the will of God. If then, when making his offering with a believing and pious intention, the devout Israelite obtained sanctifying grace and remission of his sins, it is to be observed that this was not through the operation of his sacrifice, for that could neither effect nor bestow any grace, but through the death of Jesus Christ, whose merits were applied to the Israelite beforehand, in consideration of his interior repentance.¹ It is certain, therefore, and it cannot be repeated too often, that Jesus Christ, the Lamb of Sacrifice slain on our behalf, is the source of all grace from the beginning of the world until now, and from now to all eternity: “Jesus Christ yesterday, and to-day, and the same for ever” (Heb. xiii. 8).

The political or civil laws which, together with the religious, were given by God from Mount Sinai, show clearly that Judaism was intended as a type of the spiritual kingdom of God, which was one day to be spread over the whole world. The Jewish state was, like no other, a theocracy,—that is to say, it was under the immediate government of God;—God Himself was at its head, as its Lord and King. Jehovah had graciously made known to the

¹ St. Thomas, lib. ii. 9, 103, a 2, *Peccatum dimittebatur non vi sacrificiorum, sed ex fide et devotione offerentium*. Although there was neither sacrifice nor sacrament in the pre-Christian times that could confer sanctifying grace, yet the attainment of it was by no means impossible. The contrary opinion leads to the conclusion that there were no just before Christ, for since none can be just before God without sanctifying grace, thus none can attain eternal salvation. Each could attain to it before Christ by an act of perfect charity or contrition, for which God will never deny the necessary actual grace, provided there be no hindrance on the part of the man.

people that He would reign over them. They had chosen Him as their King with joy, and sworn to Him, as such, inviolable fidelity (p. 75). "Over every nation," says the Scripture, "He set a ruler, and Israel was made the manifest portion of God" (Ecclus. xvii. 14, 15). For this cause Gedeon replied to the men who offered him the kingly power, "I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you, but the Lord shall rule over you" (Judges viii. 23). And later on, when God granted a king to the stiff-necked people, He did so with many limitations. The Israelitish king was but the temporary representative of the Divine King in the exercise of his earthly power, holding his kingdom from Him as His vassal. He was chosen not by the people, but by God; and should God cease to see in him a dutiful servant, the kingdom was lost to him and to his race. Neither was his rule absolute. He was precluded from the exercise of spiritual power, and even his right of making civil laws was limited to the application and development of the Mosaic law, according to the exigencies of the time. With regard to all important undertakings, or should questions arise concerning the wellbeing of the nation, God, as Israel's King and Arbiter, had reserved to Himself the ultimate decision, and His supreme will was to be ascertained by interrogating the high priest. The kingship disappeared in consequence of the Babylonish captivity. But God's earthly kingdom did not cease until the time when that heavenly kingdom of which it was the type was to be founded on its ruins. It was the Jews themselves who rejected their Divine King when they cried, "We have no king but Cæsar." This idea of an earthly, God-governed kingdom, in which all power and all law proceeded from God, is one which must be constantly borne in mind, if we would form a correct estimate of the political and civil law, given by God to the Jews. As actual King of Israel, He gave to His people from Sinai a constitution, by which all political, social, and domestic relations were to be regulated. As temporal King, He willed also, like other earthly kings, to enforce His laws by the promise of temporal rewards and the threat of temporal punishments (Lev. xxvi.)—a disposition which, as having regard to a people so stiff-necked and sensual as the Jews then were, bears witness to the highest wisdom in the Lawgiver. But the promise of eternal reward and the threat of eternal punishment was no more thus done away with, than was God's universal sovereignty as Creator of heaven and earth, cancelled by His holding the place of a temporal ruler.

From God, then, their Lord and King, to whom the whole earth belonged, the Israelites were to receive the Promised Land, that they might possess it and dwell there. The lands which

each received were not to be alienated, but were to remain with the family of the original possessor. Tribute was to be rendered to the Divine King, as to the Lord of the country, in the persons of the priests, whom He had constituted His immediate subordinates. This tribute was to consist in the first-fruits of the earth, the first-born of beasts, the tenth part of the produce of the soil, and the half shekel, which (originally at the numbering of the people only) every man of twenty years old and upwards was to deposit in the treasury of the temple. Inasmuch as that the Israelites were to honour Jehovah, not alone as being the true God, but as being their King also, idolatry and everything connected with it, such as soothsaying, magic, and necromancy, were offences not only against faith and piety, but also treason against the state, and as such were to be punished with death. Should an entire city fall into idolatry, it was to be utterly destroyed. Having now said all that we believe to be needful concerning the giving of the law from Mount Sinai, we will again resume the thread of our narrative.

“The Israelites soon forgot God’s commandments and benefits. They complained and murmured without ceasing, and went astray so far as to make a calf of molten gold, and to worship it.”

Moses remained forty days and forty nights without food or drink upon Mount Sinai, in order that he might learn from the Lord all His laws and His manifold ordinances. The fickle people meanwhile began to murmur. They lifted themselves up against Aaron, and impatiently required of him that he should make them gods, who would go before them. “For as to this Moses, the man that brought us out of the land of Egypt, we know not what has befallen him” (Exod. xxxii. 1). Aaron yielded, and made for them a calf of molten gold; and the people said, “These are thy gods, O Israel, that have brought thee out of the land of Egypt;” and they offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings to this helpless idol, and ate, drank, and played. Thus lightly did Israel forget God’s countless benefits, and the astounding miracles which had taken place before their eyes; thus wickedly did they trample under foot the holy and solemn covenant which they had sworn to keep for ever. So great an act of impiety was deserving of death, and it was with the fullest justice that God said to Moses, “I see that this

people is stiff-necked; let Me alone, that My wrath may be kindled against them, and that I may destroy them." But, instead of suffering God's wrath to descend upon the ungrateful people, Moses all the more earnestly besought the Lord to forgive them their great sin, or else that he himself might be blotted out of the book of life. "And the Lord was appeased from doing the evil which He had spoken against His people." In this intercession of Moses, the beloved of God, we have a glorious type of the Divine Mediator, Jesus Christ. Moses earnestly entreats for mercy and pity from an offended God; he opposes himself to the Divine vengeance; from love to his guilty people he is ready himself to receive in their place the chastisement of God's wrath, and he reconciles with them anew the injured majesty of Jehovah. From the most loving heart too of the Son of God, ardent prayers arose to heaven for the deliverance of sinful men from the fearful judgments which threatened them; in the fulness of His love towards us He took upon Himself the pains and sorrows due to our sins, "being," as St. Paul says, "made a curse for us" (Gal. iii. 13), and never left this earth until He had fully reconciled us to His offended Father, and endowed us afresh with our rights as children of God.

SECTION XII.

THE QUAILS—THE TWELVE SPIES—THE CONTINUED WANDERINGS IN THE DESERT—THE BRAZEN SERPENT—BALAAM'S BLESSING AND PROPHECY—DEATH OF MOSES—CONQUEST OF CHANAN UNDER JOSUE.

"In punishment of their many and grievous transgressions, the Israelites were obliged to wander forty years in the desert, till a new and better generation had grown up. But God did not cease to show His goodness towards them."

THE Israelites remained almost a year at the foot of Sinai. During this time Moses had the tabernacle, the ark of the covenant, and the altars, with the sacred vessels and priestly

vestments, made ready as God had commanded. To aid in carrying out this work, the people very willingly and piously brought their treasures, such as gold, silver, brass, precious stones, fine linen, and purple, and also oil and incense for the divine worship. They did not remain long, however, in this praiseworthy disposition. A short time after their departure from Sinai they wearied of the manna, and with murmurs and complaints desired the flesh-pots of Egypt. God sent them a flight of quails, but these brought death upon the discontented people in punishment of their concupiscence, whence the place where this happened was called "the graves of lust." "These things," says St. Paul (Cor. x. 16), "were done in a figure of us, that we should not covet evil things, as they also coveted." When Moses arrived on the southern borders of Palestine, he sent twelve spies into the country. Upon their return they praised the fruitfulness of the land flowing with milk and honey, and showed grapes of extraordinary size in proof of what they said. They also described the gigantic size of the inhabitants, and the strength of their numerous fortified cities. At this news a fearful uproar arose in the camp. Wearied and discouraged the people cried out, "Let us appoint a captain, and let us return into Egypt" (Num. xiv. 5). In vain did Josue and Caleb, who had been of the number of the spies, endeavour to recall to their minds the boundless power of their God. The exasperated people would not heed their warning, but threatened rather to stone them. In wrath at their never-ceasing obstinacy, the Lord pronounced upon them the sentence, that not any of those who were above twenty years of age at the time when they left Egypt, with the exception of Josue and Caleb, should see the land which had been promised to their fathers. The corpses of this stubborn generation were to lie in the wilderness, and their sons only were to enter the Land of Promise. God then commanded them to set forth the next morning, and to turn back into the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea, and told them that the children should obtain possession of the land when

the fathers' bodies should have been consumed in the desert. Speaking of this punishment of the Israelites, the Apostle says, "And with whom was He offended forty years? . . . And to whom did He swear that they should not enter into His rest; but to them that were incredulous? And we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief" (Heb. iii. 17-19). The holy Psalmist, too, had before said of them (Ps. cv. 24-26), "And they set at nought the desirable land. They believed not His word, and He lifted up His hand over them to overthrow them in the desert." The cause of their destruction was that unbelief which led them to reject the divine promises, confirmed as they had been by so many wonderful miracles. "For unto us also it hath been declared" (that we should enter, not into an earthly, but into an eternal and heavenly rest), "let us, therefore, strive through faith and confidence in Jesus Christ to enter into that rest, lest any man fall into the same example of unbelief." Lest we, losing in like manner our everlasting rest, be punished with death eternal.

Our unbelief would not be less unpardonable than that of the Israelites. Great and numberless are the miracles through which our faith is confirmed, and of these the greatest ever wrought by God is one which is being continually carried on before our eyes, in the existence, namely, of the Catholic Church itself, founded on the rock of Peter, which, in spite of all the powers of hell, leagued as they are to work its overthrow, yet after eighteen hundred years still lives on victorious, filling the world with the reflection of its splendour, and bringing forth everlasting salvation, and the fulness of heavenly blessings, amongst all the nations of the earth.

For eight-and-thirty years the Israelites wandered about in the wilderness in punishment of their transgression. It was not, however, only as a punishment to them that this long sojourn in the desert served—its many trials, sufferings, and privations, were most useful in training the younger generation for their high calling. Neither did God during this

time suffer the fountain of His special mercies to be dried up towards the unthankful people. Truly might Moses remind them, at the close of his earthly pilgrimage, that God had never ceased to heap benefits upon them, and to speak with them: "Thou hast seen that the Lord thy God bore thee into the wilderness as a man leads his son, on the whole way thou trodst, until thou camest to this place. Forty years long has the Lord thy God dwelt with thee, and nothing has been wanting to thee; He fed thee the whole time with manna, that thou didst not know, and thy fathers did not know; thy garments are not worn out with age, nor thy shoes suffered damage. After He had humbled thee with chastisements, then did He take pity upon thee, for the Lord thy God is a merciful God, He will not forsake thee, nor destroy thee entirely, nor forget His covenant, that He swore to thy fathers. Truly blessed art thou, O Israel, who is like thee, O people, that has his salvation in the Lord?" (Deut.) At the beginning of the fortieth year after their departure from Egypt, the children of Israel stood again on the southern border of Palestine. Even, then, on beginning to feel the want of water, they again cried out against Moses and Aaron. To relieve them, Moses, at God's command, struck the rock with his rod, and a plentiful stream gushed forth from the hard stone. But the faith of Moses and Aaron here failed them, in that they doubted for a moment whether God would indeed work a miracle for a people so stiff-necked; and for this failure of faith, God made known to them that they should not lead the people into the Land of Promise, but should die in the wilderness.

The Edomites, or descendants of Esau, who dwelt to the southward of the Promised Land, refused to allow the children of Israel to pass through their country in peace. Having been forbidden by the Lord to use violence towards a kindred people, they therefore resolved to avoid the territory of Edom, and to enter Palestine from the eastern side. On their way they came to Mount Hor, and here Aaron died, in his hundred and twenty-third year, and was succeeded in his

office of high priest by his son Eleazar. Weary of such constant wanderings to and fro, the people murmured anew against God and against Moses, "Why didst thou bring us out of Egypt," they said, "to die in the wilderness?" In punishment the Lord sent poisonous serpents among them, and many died of their bite. Upon this they confessed their guilt, and besought Moses to intercede for them. "And Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said to him, Make a brazen serpent, and set it up for a sign; whosoever being struck shall look on it, shall live" (Num. xxi. 7, 8). Why, we might ask, should God have attached the cure of the bites of the poisonous serpents, to the beholding the brazen serpent upon the pole? This would indeed be most incomprehensible were it not for the mystery here contained. This mystery Christ Himself explains to us when He says, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting" (John iii. 14, 15). So we see clearly that the uplifted serpent is an especially significant image of the crucified Saviour; and through it the Jews, who held the cross to be most shameful, and the crucified to be accursed of God, should have received warning not to take scandal at the cross of the Redeemer.

(1.) Poisonous serpents brought temporal death into the camp of the Israelites. Sin robs men of supernatural life, and delivers them to eternal death. (2.) In the desert the means of healing was a brazen serpent—a serpent, that is to say, which had the form of the poisonous ones, but not their venom. We are loosed from our sins by Jesus Christ the God-Man, who has taken upon Himself the form of sinful flesh, whilst He is yet untainted by the poisonous breath of sin. (3.) The serpent, that it might heal, had to be raised upon a pole, and it was needful (according to the eternal counsels of God) that Christ should be exalted upon the shameful wood of the cross, in order that He might heal those mortal wounds which our sins have inflicted. (4.) In order to share in the promised deliverance, the children of

Israel had to raise their eyes to the brazen serpent. And so sinful man becomes partaker of the benefits of redemption, when with faith and confidence he raises his eyes to Christ crucified; when, that is to say, he unites himself to Christ through a real and effectual faith, animated by confidence and love.

Sehon the king of the Amorrites, and Og the king of Basan, having manifested hostility towards the Israelites, they vanquished them, and took possession of their lands, after which they encamped in the plains of Moab, which lay to the east of the river Jordan. The Moabites, as descendants of Lot, had indeed nothing to fear from them, but, nevertheless, their king, Balac, full of anxiety, and apprehending that natural force alone would not avail to conquer this wonderful people in battle, sent for the far-famed prophet Balaam, from Mesopotamia, and promised him great rewards if he would curse the children of Israel. In this manner he hoped to deprive them of their most powerful weapon, the protection of the Almighty. His evil design, however, served only to set forth more manifestly the glory of the people of God. Balaam—who, in spite of his knowledge of the true God, was, or afterwards became, a sinful man—was, by a Divine dispensation, destined, instead of cursing, to bless Israel, and to make known far and wide, that it was the Lord Himself who bade him do so. Whilst on his fateful journey, an angel of the Lord placed himself in his way with a drawn sword in his hand, and threatened him with death; and only permitted him at last to proceed after laying upon him the strictest injunction to speak nothing but what God should command him. As to the reality of the apparition, Balaam could not deceive himself. Even his ass which he was riding, terrified by the shining sword of the angel, refused to move, and, when cruelly beaten, opened her mouth to complain of her ill treatment.¹

In consequence of this great miracle Balaam said to the

¹ Stolberg, in his "*Religions Geschichte*," vol. ii. p. 146, says, "To maintain that the Creator of all things could not produce from the mouth of a dumb

king of Moab, who came forth with respect to receive him, "Shall I have power to speak any other thing but that which God shall put in my mouth?" Balac, nevertheless, led the prophet to four different high places, whence he desired him that he should curse the people, who lay encamped in the plain below. In vain, however, did the king rage in his anger. Under the influence of a higher inspiration, Balaam each time spoke words of blessing upon Israel, and prophesied his future glory.

"How shall I curse him whom God hath not cursed? By what means should I detest him whom the Lord detesteth not? I shall see him from the tops of the rocks, and shall consider him from the hills. . . . Who can count the dust of Jacob, and know the number of the stock of Israel? Let my soul die the death of the just, and my last end be like to them. . . . I was brought to bless, the blessing I am not able to hinder. There is no idol in Jacob, neither is there an image-god to be seen in Israel. The Lord his God is with him, and the sound of the victory of the King in him. . . . How beautiful are thy tabernacles, O Jacob, and thy tents, O Israel! As woody valleys, as watered gardens near the rivers, as tabernacles which the Lord has pitched, as cedars by the water-side. Water shall flow out of his bucket, and his seed shall be in many waters. . . . They shall devour the nations that are his enemies, and break their bones. . . . Lying down he hath slept as a lion, and as a lioness, whom none shall dare to rouse. He that blesseth thee shall also himself be blessed; he that curseth thee shall be reckoned accursed. . . . I shall see Him, but not now; I shall behold Him, but not near. A Star shall rise out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall spring up from Israel, and shall strike the chiefs of Moab, and shall waste all the children of Seth. And He shall possess Idumea; but Israel shall do manfully. Out of Jacob shall come He that shall rule, and shall destroy the remains of the city (Num. xxiii., xxiv.)."

Balaam's prophecy, like the prophecies of Isaac and Jacob, the expressions and images of which it in a great measure reproduces, had reference not merely to the power and glory of the Israelites, but to that of the future kingdom of the Messias, of which the former was but a shadow. As from Mount Moria, Abraham beheld the children of this kingdom multiplied as the sand on the sea-shore, so from the tops of the rocks, Balaam too saw them, countless as the dust of the earth. He saw them in the wondrous

beast articulate sounds, which should be intelligible, not to the beast, but to man; or that if He *could* He certainly *would* not do so, is presumptuous and absurd.

splendour of justification, and his heart's wish was that his soul might die the death of the just. And it was concerning this spiritual kingdom which should arise in the last days, but which the seer's eye already beheld, that the blessing of Balaam was spoken.

In it the Almighty is enthroned, to protect and to govern it; from it resound, day and night, songs of praise and of the victory of the Heavenly King; and the incense of prayers, offered in honour of the true God alone, is ever rising. The image which here follows of the beauty of the tabernacles of Jacob, sets forth, though but feebly, the glory and beauty of the Christian Church, filling, as she does, our hearts with joy, by the abundance of the precious fruits which the Holy Ghost brings forth in her; and our minds with wonder at the glorious battles and victories of her heroic children, who, now that their labours are over, for ever celebrate the eternal triumph of the blessed. What else means the overflowing water, of which Balaam speaks, but the abundance of heavenly graces and blessings offered to all by the Church of Christ. And does not that mysterious stream point clearly to the countless multitude of men, of every people and nation, who are continually flowing into her from all quarters. Like Jacob, Balaam shows forth the power of the kingdom of the Messiah by the type of a strong lion, whom none should dare to rouse. Balaam says now to Israel, as God before said to Abraham, "He that blesseth thee shall also himself be blessed; he that curseth thee shall be reckoned accursed." That Balaam had also in view the kingdom of the Messiah appears fully from the prophecy which here follows concerning the future Star, Sceptre, and Ruler, which had its perfect accomplishment only in Jesus Christ. For to whom but to Christ can that wonderful star refer, which Balaam saw rise in the distant future, and which, after the lapse of more than a thousand years, was to guide the sages of the east to the crib of the Saviour at Bethlehem? Of whom was that star an image but of Jesus Christ, who says of Himself in the Apocalypse, "I am the bright Morning-Star"? This, too, is that bright and shining light which hovered before the eyes of the prophet Isaias when he said, "Arise, be enlightened, O Jerusalem; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth and a mist the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee" (Is. lx. 1, 2). The Sceptre, too, that should arise out of Israel and crush the princes of Moab, and the mighty Ruler who should come forth from Jacob and destroy his enemies, are not these, too, Christ, the glorious Victor over the pride of Paganism and the powers of darkness, of whom it is written, that "He will send forth the sceptre of His power out of Zion" (Ps. cix. 2), and that "He

shall rule His enemies with a rod of iron, and break them in pieces like a potter's vessel" (Ps. ii. 9).¹

At the close of the fortieth year of their wanderings, when the Israelites were about to cross the Jordan and enter the Promised Land, Moses was warned by God that the day of his death was not far distant. Like a tender father, he assembled the children of Israel once more, that he might admonish them for the last time. The words in which he did so were full of such deep wisdom and overflowing love, as could have proceeded only from a heart and soul divinely illuminated as was his. Once again he presented before their minds the glorious picture of the many benefits they had received, and of the wonders which God had wrought before their eyes. He then warned them not to forget those things which their eyes had seen; never, so long as they lived, to let them fade from their remembrance, but to teach them to their sons and to their grandsons (Deut. iv. 9). Once more he recalled to them the commandments given by the Lord from Mount Sinai, and made them swear to hold them constantly in mind and to observe them faithfully.

"Hear, O Israel," he said, "the Lord our God is one Lord. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole strength. And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thy heart: and thou shalt tell them to thy children, and thou shalt meditate upon them sitting in thy house, and walking on thy journey, sleeping, and rising (Deut. vi.).

"Now if thou wilt hear the voice of the Lord thy God, to do and keep all His commandments, . . . blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed in the field. . . . The Lord will make thee abound with all goods, . . . and He will bless all the works of thy hands. . . . But if thou wilt not hear the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep . . . all His commandments; cursed shalt thou be in the city, cursed in the field. The Lord shall send

¹ Balaam's prophecy respecting the Star, Sceptre, and Ruler is regarded, not by the Fathers of the Church only, but also by the most weighty of the Jewish commentators, as referring to the Messiah and His reign. (See Reinke, "*Beiträge zur Erklärung des alten Testaments*," vol. iv.) But the rest of the prophecy, here omitted from want of space, is justly regarded as applicable either to the reign of the Messiah or the Christian Church. (See Meignan, "*Prophéties Messianiques*," five Proph.)

upon thee famine and hunger, and a rebuke upon all the works which thou shalt do (Deut. xxviii.).

“I call heaven and earth to witness this day, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Choose therefore life, that thou and thy seed may live, . . . that thou mayest dwell in the land for which the Lord swore to thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that he would give it them.”

Moses also made to the Israelites the promise, as consoling as it was glorious, that the Lord would raise up from their midst a Prophet like unto himself,—(being, that is, like Moses, at once prophet, mediator, and founder of a new covenant). Him they were to hear, and if any would not hear His words, on him would God’s vengeance fall (Deut. xviii.). The whole of the law, and of the history of the people of Israel, had been recorded by Moses in five books, and these he now delivered to the Levites, that they might lay them up beside the ark of the covenant. Then, after having given utterance to the sublime canticle, “Hear, O ye Heavens,” and after having invoked a blessing severally upon each of the tribes, he ascended Mount Nebo, whence the Lord showed him the whole land of Juda unto the farthest seas, and there, in the hundred and twentieth year of his age, he died. Josue, of the tribe of Ephraim, says the Scripture, “was filled with the spirit of wisdom, because Moses had laid his hands upon him. And the children of Israel obeyed him.”

Until He came, of whom Moses was but a type, no prophet arose in Israel like unto Moses (none who possessed such miraculous powers, or who was admitted to such familiar converse with God). Moses was in many respects a glorious type of Christ; not merely on account of his wonderful rescue in childhood, his call, and his gift of miracles, but as a redeemer also and a leader out of hard slavery, as a wise teacher and lawgiver, as the founder of a covenant, as mediator and prophet. (Vol. 2. pp. 183, 185.) In one important point, however, Moses was not destined to be a type of the Saviour of the world. Jesus Christ leads His redeemed into heaven, but Moses was not permitted to lead the Israelites into that Promised Land which was the type of heaven. His

earnest prayers, that God would grant him this favour, were in vain. The Lord, who in so great things had before let Himself be entreated of His servant, now would not listen to him; and with seeming harshness answered, "It is enough: speak no more to Me of this matter" (Deut. iii. 26). This was not merely in punishment for the sin which was apparently such a slight one, but was owing to a special council of the Most High. "Moses," says St. Augustine, "was not to lead the people into the Promised Land, that none might think that the law which God had given through Moses (of which, that is to say, Moses is the representative) could suffice to lead us into heaven, which was indeed first opened to us by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Contra Faustus, lib. xvi. cap. 19). The glorious task of leading the people of Israel into the Promised Land was imposed on Osee, the son of Nun; and his name of "Josue," which was given to him by Moses, sets him before us as a type of Jesus Christ. ("Josue" and "Jesus" are two forms of the same name, the first being Hebrew, the latter Greek.)

"At last, after the death of Moses, God led the Israelites into the Promised Land of Chanaan or Palestine, which they conquered by His powerful aid, and divided amongst their twelve tribes. (About 1450 B.C.)"

Chanaan, properly speaking, lay on the farther side of the river Jordan, and, in order to take possession of it, Josue and all the people walked, at God's command, through the bed of the swollen river, whose waters parted asunder before the ark of the covenant, and, as those of the Red Sea had done before, gave free passage to the Israelites.

And now God's judgments began upon the idolatrous and profligate dwellers of the land. The immediate destruction of the fortified town of Jericho, showed that the Lord was with Josue in war. Not by human strength, but simply at the sound of trumpets, the walls of this strong fortress crumbled, and every living thing within it was put to the sword. When Josue gave battle near Gabaon, a city in alliance with Israel, to five Amorrhithish kings, God sent a fearful hailstorm upon the enemy; and that he might be able

to follow up his victory, at Josue's command the sun and moon stood still. "So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down the space of one day. There was not before or after so long a day, the Lord obeying the voice of a man, and fighting for Israel" (Jos. x.). Protected visibly by God, Josue, by a series of glorious victories, overcame thirty-one hostile kings, and took possession of their territory. The complete extermination of the Chanaanites was left to the different tribes of Israel, and was not to take place all at once, in order that the land might not be left a waste, and lest the wild beasts should increase against Israel. The Chanaanites too, were given in this manner a "place of repentance."

That the tribes of Israel might recognise that each had received his share from God, the Lord commanded Josue to divide that part of the land which lay west of the Jordan, by lot, among those who had not already received their inheritance. The eastern side had been bestowed already by Moses on the tribes of Ruben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasses. Through this drawing of lots almost the whole of the southern territory fell to the chosen tribe of Juda. The priestly tribe of Levi was to be dispersed throughout the whole country, and separate cities, without much land attached to them, were therefore allotted to it. This partition first ceased at the Babylonish captivity. At a later period Chanaan was divided into three provinces: the northern being called Galilee, the central Samaria, and the southern Judea. The Promised Land, as we have often before said, is a type of heaven, and Josue a type of Jesus Christ, who leads us to the glory of the heavenly kingdom, and apports to each of us there a happy dwelling-place. The Israelites, we see, only obtained their long-promised inheritance through hard though glorious struggles, and so we, in like manner, have to fight our way to the eternal rest of our heavenly country. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence," says Jesus Christ Himself, "and the violent bear it away" (Matt. xi. 12). "Whilst they," says Origen, "fight

with visible weapons, we fight with invisible; whilst they win material victories, we triumph in spiritual combats." For "our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, . . . against the spirits of wickedness in the high places" (Eph. vi. 12). Yet though it is by faithfully striving for it that eternal life must be won, that life is also no less "the grace of God . . . in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. vi. 23), and the crown of victory held out to us by the hand of the Most High: "Therefore shall they receive a kingdom of glory and a crown of beauty at the hand of the Lord" (Wisd. v. 17). And let those enemies who envy us our crowns be never so mighty and numerous, we have yet nothing to fear; for God will ever stand by us, as He did by the Israelites, with His supernatural protection and all-powerful grace. For Israel, it was but once that the sun stood still, and hasted not to go down for a day; "but for us," says St. Isidore of Seville (Sup. lib. Josue xii.), "the Sun of Justice unceasingly shines, and never leaves us or hastes to go down, because Christ Himself has said, 'I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world'" (Matt. xxviii. 30).

SECTION XIII.

ISRAEL UNDER THE JUDGES—THE VICTORIES OF GEDEON AND SAMSON
—IN WHAT MANNER THE JUDGES ARE TO BE REGARDED.

"The Israelites were blessed of God, and lived happily in this beautiful country until, contrary to the Lord's command, they made marriages with the heathen, and thus fell into idolatry and crime. So often as they turned away from God, so often did He give them into the power of their enemies, and when they repented, He raised up among them devout heroes, who were called Judges, such as Gedeon, Jephte, and Samson, who freed them from their foes."

THE Israelites now dwelt in the beautiful Promised Land, flowing with milk and honey, and "the Lord gave them peace from all nations round about, and none of their enemies durst stand against them" (Josue xxi. 43). They

continued to serve their great and true God truly and willingly so long as Josue yet lived, and until that elder generation, which had seen all the glorious and wonderful works that the Lord had done in Israel, had passed away. But it was the occasion of their greatest misery, that most of the tribes gave themselves up to indolent repose, and instead of rooting out, as God had commanded, the impious Chanaanites, and breaking their idols (see p. 55), they entered into friendly relations with them, and made marriages with them. In consequence, it was not long before "the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, . . . and they left the Lord, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt, and they followed strange gods" (Judg. ii.). To lead them back from error, God gave them into the hands of the surrounding nations, their sworn enemies, who cruelly oppressed and tyrannised over them. In their misery they repented and turned to the Lord, who heard their cries, and raised up among them judges, who, as specially deputed to the office by God, placed themselves at the head of the whole nation, or of several of the tribes, conquered the numerous foes without and within, restored the wandering people to the observance of God's law, and watched over the general peace and order. "But after the judge was dead," we read, "they returned, and did much worse things than their fathers had done, following strange gods, serving them and adoring them" (Judg. ii. 19). Scripture gives us the names of fourteen of these powerful and God-gifted men. Not seldom, they were men of humble station, brought up amidst the employments of an ordinary life of labour, but enabled through miraculous assistance to perform the great deeds to which they were called. By this provision of Almighty God, we are reminded forcibly of that other provision by which our Divine Lord intrusted the spiritual renovation of the world to instruments so feeble and insignificant, that St. Paul justly says, in speaking of them, "And the weak things of the world hath God chosen, that He may confound the strong: and the base things of

the world, and the things that are contemptible, hath God chosen, and things that are not, that He might bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in His sight" (1 Cor. i. 27-29). The spreading abroad of Christianity and the victories of the judges were alike designed to make manifest that it is the Lord, the Almighty God of heaven and earth, who does great deeds, putting to shame the most powerful of foes and rescuing His servants from destruction. The deeds of some of the judges were performed in a manner so strange and mysterious, that we can only explain them satisfactorily by regarding them, with the Fathers, as having a mystical signification. It will suffice here to make mention of the most striking instances of this kind in the lives of Gedeon and Samson.

When, humbled at last by seven years of hard oppression from the Madianites, Israel cried to the Lord for help, God sent an angel to Gedeon whilst he was threshing wheat; and the angel announced to him that through him, the "most valiant of men," the Lord would deliver Israel. Gedeon replied, in astonishment, "Wherewith shall I deliver Israel? Behold, my family is the meanest in Manasses, and I am the least in my father's house." The Lord answered him, "I will be with thee, and thou shalt cut off Madian as one man" (Judg. vi. 15, 16). Upon this Gedeon called the people to arms; and then, as a sign that the Lord would deliver Israel by his means, he entreated that the fleece which he should spread that night upon the ground might be found in the morning wet with dew, whilst the earth around should be dry. And when this had come to pass, he prayed that the next night the fleece might remain dry, whilst the dew should fall upon the earth around it. And this request God also granted. That the people of Israel might not think that it was by their own strength that the victory was gained, God suffered, of the thirty-two thousand men whom Gedeon had assembled, only three hundred to go forth to battle. Those were chosen who, instead of kneeling by the brook to drink, took up the water in the palms of their hands. This little

troop Gedeon armed with trumpets, empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers. At midnight they approached the place where the hosts of the enemy lay encamped, and, surrounding it, they suddenly blew the trumpets, broke the pitchers, and cried, "The sword of the Lord and of Gedeon." With cries and shrieks the Madianites took to flight, and God sent confusion amongst them, so that they turned their swords against one another, and perished with much bloodshed.

According to the teaching of the Fathers, these wonderful events are the foreshadowings of a mystery which was to receive its glorious fulfilment in Jesus Christ. (1.) Gedeon, the least of his brethren, was chosen by God to free Israel from the thralldom of Madian; and Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came upon earth as the meanest of the children of men, and the reproach of His people, that He might redeem humanity from the degrading yoke of Satan. (2.) The royal prophet said of the Son of God (Ps. lxxi. 6), "He shall come down like rain upon the fleece." This truly came to pass, when the Divine Word came down into the most pure womb of the Blessed Virgin. The Church sings, "By thy wonderful birth of a virgin the words of Scripture were fulfilled, 'Thou camest down like dew upon the fleece, that Thou mightest save the race of men' ('Sicut pluvia in vellus descendisti, ut salvum faceres genus humanum')." The earlier Fathers, especially St. Irenæus (*Contra Hæret.*, lib. iii. cap. 17), and Origen (*Sup. lib. Jud. Hom. 8a.*), who, in support of his opinion, quotes some still older commentators on the Scripture—as also St. Jerome, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, and St. Isidore of Seville,—see another signification in the fleece of Gedeon. They hold that Gedeon's fleece, drenched with dew, signifies the chosen people of Israel, who were so richly gifted with the heavenly dew of the Divine Word, of which the rest of mankind were deprived. And again, that the meaning of the dry fleece is, that the Jews, by their subsequent rejection of the Redeemer, dried up for themselves the fountain of God's Word, with which the

Gentiles were then enriched with yet greater abundance. (3.) In what a surprising manner it was that Gedeon gained the victory. For what commander on the point of attacking a powerful enemy would dismiss the greater part of his followers? "Who," asks Pope St. Gregory (*Moral*, lib. xxx. cap. 35), "would go into battle with pitchers and torches, and cast away his weapons to shield himself from wounds?" No one who takes pains to understand the hidden meaning of the Scriptures, can help seeing what a surprising image we have here of the victory of the Christian Church over the powers of heathendom. What did Christ the Lord oppose to that mighty enemy, who had extended his dominion over the whole earth, and had reigned for thousands of years? Not armed hosts, not earthly power or wisdom, but a little band of apostles and disciples, poor and unlearned, but who had renounced generously the joys and pleasures of this world. Armed like Gedeon's warriors they rushed into the fight. "They blew," says St. Gregory (*ibid.*), "their trumpets when they preached; they broke their pitchers when they offered their mortal bodies to the swords of their enemies; they enlightened with their torches when the fame of their miracles was spread abroad. Through the Word of God which they preached, the wonders which they wrought, and the death which they joyfully underwent for their Lord, they shattered the kingdom of hell to ruins, and subjected the whole world to the sceptre of Jesus Christ. As in the camp of Madian the sword of the Lord and of Gedeon was invisibly wielded, so the spiritual conquest of the world was accomplished by the power of Christ and the irresistible virtue of His saving cross.

Many other judges arose in Israel after Gedeon, whose commission it was to free the people from their enemies and lead them back to God. But the Israelites sinned again before the Lord, and for forty years were spoiled and oppressed by the warlike Philistines. God, however, took pity on His people in their need. In the land of the tribe of Dan lived a man named Manue, whose wife was barren.

The angel of the Lord appeared to her, and announced to her that she should bear a son, whose head no razor should touch; for that he should be a Nazarite (consecrated, that is, to God) from his mother's womb, and should begin to deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines (Judg. xiii.). As the young Samson grew up, the Spirit of the Lord was with him. He judged the people of Israel for twenty years, and protected them with a strong hand from the proud Philistines. It was not, however, as a leader in the field of battle that he overcame his enemies. It was through his own miraculous and unheard-of bodily strength that his great deeds were achieved, thus showing that God could save as easily by one man as by a whole host. Samson, however, sullied the brightness of his fame and forfeited his success by an act of folly which proved his ruin. He had become enamoured of the faithless Dalila, a woman of the Philistines. She continually besought him to tell her the secret of his strength. Wearied by her importunity, he at length replied, "The razor is never come upon my head, for I am a Nazarite, that is to say, consecrated to God from my mother's womb; if my head be shaven, my strength shall depart from me, and I shall become weak, and shall be like other men."¹ Upon this Dalila caused his hair to be shorn off, and delivered him into the hands of the enraged Philistines. By them he was blinded, cast into prison, and forced to grind corn like the meanest slave. A short time afterwards the Philistines celebrated a great feast in honour of one of their idols, and they sent for Samson, that he might make sport for them, and that they might mock him. But Samson's hair meantime had grown again, and with it his former strength had returned to him; and now, seizing upon two of the pillars which supported a platform whereon three thousand people, including all the princes of the Philistines,

¹ The Nazarites vowed to God never to taste wine or any intoxicating drink, and not to let the hair of their heads be cut. When Samson's hair was cut, he ceased to be a Nazarite, and lost the strength with which, as such, God had endowed him.

were assembled, he called upon the mighty God of Israel, and shook the pillars so violently that the whole house fell together, "and he killed many more at his death than he had killed before in his life" (Judg. xvi. 30).

"What," asks St. Augustine, "was Samson? I maintain him to have been a type of Christ, and, in so doing, I believe that I maintain truly." St. Isidore of Seville, in his "Questions upon the Book of Judges," chap. viii., says that Samson typifies Christ, first, because his birth was announced by an angel; secondly, because he was called a Nazarite; and lastly, because he destroyed the idol's temple, in which many thousands of his enemies were killed.

Samson, then, is in certain marked ways a type of Jesus Christ. (1.) Both were born in accordance with the promise of an angel,—the one of a virgin, the other of a woman who was barren. (2.) Samson was a Nazarite, and St. Matthew, speaking of Christ, says, "That it might be fulfilled which was said by the prophets, That he shall be called a Nazarite" (ii. 23). (3.) He is also eminently a type of our Lord in the plots laid for him by Dalila, in his humiliations, and in his death. Jesus Christ tenderly loved the Jewish Synagogue, and would have mercifully received her into the communion of the Christian Church, and thus made her His spiritual bride; but she, on the contrary, proved His faithless betrayer. The Jews, with hypocritical cunning, demanded of Him, "How long dost Thou hold our souls in suspense? If Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly" (John x. 24). And when, in presence of the high priest, he openly proclaimed Himself to be the Son of God, their cry was heard on every side, "He hath blasphemed, He is guilty of death," and they delivered their Redeemer and their Lord into the hands of the Gentiles. So did impiety, as it seemed, triumph over Christ, the King of glory! He was bound like a malefactor, dragged through the streets to the tribunal of a human judge; He was mocked and blasphemed; He was made the sport of a fierce soldiery, and died, as the meanest of the children of men, with His arms stretched out upon the shameful wood of the cross.

But when did the earth ever see a victory more complete and glorious than at the moment when the universe, awe-struck at the murder of her God, bewailed the death of Jesus Christ? It was in death that Christ celebrated His highest triumph. He could say, in the solemn joy of victory, "I have overcome" the world ;—His enemies now lay crushed beneath His feet, sin and death were vanquished, and the power of hell was at an end.

Although the Israelitish judges cannot for the most part be reckoned as models of holiness, they still, however, furnish most significant types of Jesus Christ. "In the Book of Judges," writes St. Jerome to Paulinus (Ep. liii.), "we find as many types as there are judges of the people." These extraordinary men were prototypes of the Messias, not by the blamelessness of their lives, but as the saviours of the people of God. Thus, by means of the judges, temporal calamity was averted and temporal well-being secured ; whilst Jesus, on the other hand, is the Mediator for the spiritual and eternal well-being of the soul. Through the judges tyrannical oppressors were humbled and driven away ; but Christ led captive those powers of darkness which had exercised so relentless a tyranny over the whole world. With regard to those human failings and infirmities into which they fell, we must, if we would be just to these great men, bear well in mind that that high and pure standard of moral perfection, since set up by Christianity, under the old covenant, neither prevailed nor would have been understood. Thus many things might have been done then, either with a good intention, or at least without grievous guilt in the sight of God, which would not be permitted under the Gospel. For instance, Jepthe might with a good intention, or at any rate without sin, have made, and conscientiously fulfilled, a vow which was rash, and even in itself exceptionable. We cannot doubt that these brave and pious men bewailed their sins, and did due penance for them ; and we know that the splendour of their heroic virtues filled their own and succeeding ages with wonder and admiration. Not only did they maintain an unswerving faith in the true God in the midst of a most lamentable corruption, but they were ever ready also to offer up their lives and their goods to avenge the honour of Jehovah upon His enemies, and to rescue the people of Israel from oppression and servitude. And the office of judge too, frequently so arduous, they invariably discharged in strict accordance with God's law. So St. Paul holds up to us the judges as patterns of faith, especially Gedeon, Barak, Samson, Jephte, and Samuel (Heb. xi. 32, 33). "Who," he says, "by

faith conquered kingdoms, wrought justice, obtained promises." . . . And how beautiful is the praise bestowed upon them in the Book of Ecclesiasticus. "Then all the judges," we read there, "each is praised every one by name, whose heart was not corrupted, who turned not away from the Lord. That their memory might be blessed, and their bones spring up out of their place, and their name continue for ever, the glory of the holy men remaining unto their children" (xlv. 13-15).

SECTION XIV.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE KINGDOM—SAUL—DAVID.

"For more than four hundred years the highest dignity amongst the people of Israel had been invested in the high priests and the judges. But now they desired that they might have a king to rule over them, like the nations of the land; and God gave them Saul for their king."

THE last two judges in Israel had been the high priest Heli, and after him Samuel the Levite, who had been born in answer to the prayers of his pious mother Anna, and by her consecrated to God from his childhood. Heli was a weak man. He had failed to punish the outrageous crimes through which his two sons, Ophni and Phinees, dishonoured their holy office; and, as a well-merited chastisement, God sent to him His faithful servant Samuel, to announce to him the destruction which was to overtake him and his whole house. In the next war against the Philistines, in which the Israelites suffered entire defeat, the two impious priests, Ophni and Phinees, were slain on the field of battle in the flower of their age, and the ark of the covenant, which they had accompanied, fell into the hands of the enemy. The report of this terrible news caused the sudden death of the aged Heli. Meanwhile, Samuel had grown up in the service of the sanctuary, and "became great before the Lord" (1 Kings ii. 21) "and was beloved of the Lord his God" (Ecclus. xlv. 16). Filled with holy zeal for the honour of Jehovah, he persuaded the Israelites to cast out the false gods from amongst them. He

humbled the pride of the Philistines, and recovered the cities which they had taken from Israel. But his sons did not walk in the footsteps of their father: they fell into covetousness, turned aside from justice, and gave but a poor promise for the future.

At this time the king of the Ammonites rose up to make war upon Israel; the people therefore besought Samuel to give them a king, "as also all the nations have one," who might lead them into battle against their enemies; the judges, having hitherto for the most part ruled only over particular tribes, not being able to assemble all the forces of the nation against their foes. Samuel's remonstrances were of no avail, and the Lord granted them a king. Although a theocracy did not preclude government by a king, and though, indeed, the foundations of the kingly power had been laid down in the law of Moses, yet this desire of the people was very displeasing in the sight of God. The violence with which they clamoured after a king, who should rule over them after the manner of the heathen kings, showed clearly the vanity of their motive, and their want of trust in the divine protection. And thus God said to Samuel, "They have not rejected thee, but Me, that I should not reign over them" (1 Kings viii. 7). At the command of the Lord, Samuel anointed Saul as king. He came of one of the least of the families of the tribe of Benjamin; he was a brave man, and of unusually high stature; and when Samuel presented him to the assembled people, with the words, "Here you see him whom the Lord has chosen, for his like is not among the whole people," they all cried, "Long live the king."

"When Saul through disobedience had brought rejection upon himself, he was succeeded by David. David was active and strong. When a youth he overcame the giant Goliath. As a king he extended his dominions through brilliant victories; he served God with an upright heart, and composed beautiful hymns in His honour, wherein he was divinely inspired to prophesy many things concerning that Redeemer of the world, who was to be born of his race, and of whose kingdom there was to be no end. Christ is on this account called also 'the Son of David.'"

Saul, the newly-chosen king, was gifted by God, together with his high dignity, with a new heart also. Within a short time he had won a splendid victory over the Ammonites. But before long he lost the consciousness that he was but a vassal or regent of God, the true King of Israel. In defiance of the commandment of the Lord, he, although not a priest, took upon himself to offer up sacrifice. He spared also the king of the Amalecites, and the best of their flocks, notwithstanding that the Lord had expressly ordered that they should be destroyed. For this cause Saul was cast off by God, and another chosen to be king of Israel in his stead. God sent Samuel to Isai, a Bethlehemite of the tribe of Juda, that he might anoint David, his youngest son, to be king of Israel. This young hero, whilst yet a boy, had torn asunder lions and bears, and now, armed with confidence in God, he met the proud giant Goliath, who had so arrogantly mocked at the armies of Israel, and slew him in single combat by one blow from a stone. But the anger and jealousy of Saul were aroused by the fame of this victory. He strove constantly to take the life of the now renowned shepherd-boy, and David had in consequence to flee before him from one desert place to another. The Lord, however, was his protector, and brought to nought all the malice of his enemy. Time after time Saul fell into his hands, but David never revenged himself, sparing always the Lord's anointed. Through all these trials and persecutions David preserved unshaken his confidence in God, and patiently waited for his elevation to the throne of Israel. At last, after Saul had been slain in a desperate battle with the Philistines, David was publicly anointed in Hebron, and recognised as king, first by the tribe of Juda, and soon after by the whole nation. He marched at the head of the army upon the Jebusites, and captured from them the fortress of Sion, which they still occupied. He chose Jerusalem for his capital, and caused the ark of the covenant to be borne there amidst the rejoicings of the people. Filled with gratitude to Jehovah who had raised him from his low estate, the pious king enacted many ordinances for the splendour of

divine worship. He caused the feasts to be kept with greater magnificence, cared for the sumptuous adornment of the sanctuary, and appointed singers who, accompanied by lutes, harps, and cymbals, should celebrate the praises of the Lord and magnify His holy name. In many wars he overcame with a strong hand the Philistines, Moabites, and all surrounding nations. He pushed his conquests to the Euphrates, and forced many kings to pay him tribute; and within his own now extensive kingdom he dispensed justice and judgment to the people. David was a man after God's own heart. All his prosperity, however, did not preserve him from a sad and heavy fall. In an unguarded moment this king, hitherto so glorious, was betrayed into the crime of adultery, and this sin he followed by the murder of the loyal Urias, the husband of Bethsabee, the woman whom he had seduced. The reproof of the prophet Nathan, however, wrought in him sincere contrition, and he bore with touching resignation the heavy punishments pronounced upon him:—the death of the dearly-loved child born to him by Bethsabee, the mournful divisions in his family, the rebellion of his impious and undutiful son Absalom, by which he, his king and father, was forced in his old age to flee from Jerusalem, the reproaches of Semei, and other afflictions without number. From the teachings of Holy Scripture, as explained by the Fathers, it appears that David was most especially a type of Jesus Christ. He is brought forward as such in many of the Psalms, and much that is there said of his sufferings, battles, and victories, can only be fully understood when applied to Jesus Christ. David's encounter with Goliath is unmistakably a figure of our Lord's encounter with the terrible enemy of our salvation, whom He overcame, as David did much the much-dreaded giant. (1.) For forty days the Philistine presumed insolently to challenge Israel, in contempt of the Most High; and so Satan, in contempt of God, has triumphed for ages over mankind. (2.) Until David, the shepherd-boy, came, none in Israel dared measure his strength with that of the savage

Philistine. What creature was there, even though the highest and most gloriously endowed of the angels, that could in his own strength have overcome the infernal spirit? Jesus Christ, the mighty King of heaven, was alone able to tread under foot the head of the proud dragon. (3.) Goliath went forth to battle with his shield, sword, and spear. The hosts of Satan encountered Christianity in full panoply, armed with all the might of the heathen world. (4.) It was with his staff in his hand that David advanced to meet the foe; and Christ, bearing His cross, went forth to Golgotha, the scene of His battle and His victory. Goliath mocked the staff as contemptible: "Am I a dog," he said, "that thou comest to me with a staff?" and so the world pours forth its envenomed ridicule and scorn upon the holy Cross. (5.) The head of the Philistine giant was cut off with his own sword, and the dominion of hell was shattered by the persecution it raised against Christ and His holy Church. (6.) The daughters of Israel came forth with songs of praise to meet the victorious David; and the glorious risen Saviour ascended into the kingdom amidst rejoicing choirs of angels and saints. (See St. Ephrem, First Book of Kings xvii., xviii.)

David is, moreover, emphatically a type of Jesus Christ, in his humiliations, persecutions, and sufferings. Born, like Christ, in the small and insignificant city of Bethlehem, he, too, led at first an unknown and hidden life, of which none took any account (1 Kings xvi. 12). Long after he had been anointed king, men no more foresaw the high destiny of the son of Isai, than they guessed Jesus, the poor carpenter's son, to be the King and Lord of heaven and earth. (2.) The fullness of divine grace which was evidently upon him, caused Saul, to whom he had ever done good, to be filled with hatred towards him, insomuch that, innocent as he was, he sought in his rage to destroy him; and in like manner did the Jews to Christ the Lord. (3.) David was mocked, and treated as a fool by Achis, the king of the Philistines; and King Herod mocked the Redeemer of the world. (4.) Full of pain and anxiety, David fled from his rebellious son Absalom over

the brook of Cedron to Mount Olivet; Christ, too, on His way to Mount Olivet, in His deepest sorrow, crossed this same brook. (5.) As the God-Man was betrayed by Judas, one of the twelve, so David, too, was betrayed by his trusted friend Achitophel, who then hanged himself in despair, like the miserable Judas. (6.) Christ the meek Lamb of God repaid the hatred and cruelty of His enemies only by kindness, gentleness, and patience; and so also did David: for with what generosity he repeatedly spared his implacable enemy Saul; what bitter tears, too, he shed over the miserable fates of Saul and of Absalom; even like as Christ, with the tenderest pity, wept over the blind and ungrateful city of Jerusalem. Christ prayed for those who blasphemed and crucified Him; David, like Him, refrained from returning evil to Semei, who persecuted him, cast stones at him, and reproached him, in the midst of his great affliction.

David too, as the mighty king and conqueror, is again a type of Christ. The complete victory which he won over those surrounding kings who had sworn together to destroy him, is commemorated in the words which the Psalmist spoke concerning the Messiah (Ps. ii. 2, 4): "The kings of the earth stood up, and the princes met together, against the Lord and against His Christ. . . . He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh at them: and the Lord shall deride them." And as in the same Psalm it is written of Christ that "He is appointed King by the Lord over Sion, His holy mountain" (ver. 6); so it was in Jerusalem, upon Mount Sion, that the kingly throne of David was set up. And what else does that earthly Jerusalem signify but Holy Church, the spiritual Jerusalem on earth, where Christ wields the sceptre of His dominion during time, and again, too, the heavenly Jerusalem, where hereafter He shall wield it for eternity.

To the renown of a king and warrior, David added that of a divinely-inspired prophet; in this, too, typifying Jesus Christ, the greatest of all prophets. Those glorious hymns which we call the Psalms of David were composed

by him under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. In them he speaks not only of the power, wisdom, goodness, and mercy of God and of His holy law, of the happiness of the just, and the misery of the wicked—but also of the coming Redeemer and His marvellous kingdom. In the 2d and the 109th Psalms, he treats of the eternal generation of the Son of God, of His priesthood according to the order of Melchisedech, and of His victory over all His enemies. In the 21st Psalm he beholds Him, the fairest of the sons of men, in His passion, become the reproach of men and the outcast of the people, besieged by the council of the malignant, trampled like a worm in the dust, and overwhelmed with sorrow; he beholds His hands and feet pierced through, His bones numbered, His garments parted, and lots cast for His vesture. Again, in the 15th and 23d Psalms, the glorious resurrection and ascension of the Saviour are foretold; whilst in the 71st and 88th, His supreme and eternal dominion, and the graces which flow from Him over the whole earth, are joyfully celebrated. And this almighty and eternal Lord, this only Son of the Most High, is to be called “the Son of David.” For the Lord swore to David, “Of the fruit of thy body I will set upon thy throne” (Ps. cxxxi. 11); “I will make his seed to endure for evermore, and his throne as the days of heaven” (Ps. lxxxviii. 30). (See Acts ii. 30.) The more nearly the time approached in which, according to God’s eternal decrees, this Sun of Justice was to arise in all His splendour, the brighter grew the dawn which preceded Him, and the more distinctly does the spiritual eye behold the Messiah. To our first parents it was announced that He should be of their descendants; to Noe, that He should arise from among the children of Sem; in Abraham, His nation is pointed out; Jacob beholds Him springing from the tribe of Juda; whilst to David is given the consoling promise that it is of his own seed that the Saviour will be born.

SECTION XV.

THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON—HIS GLORIOUS REIGN—HIS BUILDING
OF THE TEMPLE—HIS FALLING AWAY.

“Solomon, David’s son and successor, was a wise and great king. He raised a splendid temple to the Lord in Jerusalem. In it the holy of holies was overlaid with most pure gold, and there the ark of the covenant stood, with the tables of the law written by God. Into this sanctuary the high priest alone was permitted to enter but once a year. There was no other temple in Israel, neither were any allowed to offer sacrifice save in the temple at Jerusalem.”

SOLOMON, as well as David, is regarded by the Holy Scriptures and by the Fathers as a sublime type of Jesus Christ. If it were not so, how should we, as we do, find the Apostles¹ quoting passages of Scripture which in the first place referred to Solomon, as though they had been said of our Lord Himself? To the Fathers the likeness appears especially in Solomon’s wisdom, his dominion, and his building of the temple. All other wisdom paled before the wisdom of Solomon, like the stars before the brightness of the mid-day sun; and so in Jesus Christ, in a far higher degree, “are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,” for He is Himself the uncreated, eternal Wisdom. Men came from far distant lands to see the wisdom of Solomon. The queen of Saba came with all her train to Jerusalem, bringing royal gifts of gold, spices, and precious stones, and extolled the happiness of his servants in being able to stand in his presence and hear his words. And so the nations of the whole earth, as they learn the divine wisdom of the Saviour, hasten joyfully to offer Him their service, bringing gifts of pious works and loving and believing hearts. (See St. Gregory of Nyssa on the Canticle of Canticles (?) Hom. vii.) Solomon’s

¹ St. Peter thus quotes (Acts ii. 30) the above-mentioned text from the 131st Psalm, ver. 11, and St. Paul (Heb. i. 5) cites the text, “I will be to him a father, and he shall be to Me a son” (2 Kings vii. 14). See St. Augustine, “De Civitate Dei,” lib. xvii. 8.

reign was distinguished by a lasting peace, by unexampled splendour, and by all the advantages which arise from wealth and glory. But how weak and contemptible was this kingdom compared with that everlasting kingdom promised to David and his seed, of which it was but a shadow. (2 Kings vii. 16.) There, where the glorified Saviour sits enthroned on the right hand of His Father, He prepares for His faithful ones an everlasting, untroubled peace,—a peace surpassing all understanding, a joy and glory without measure, of which it is written, “They shall be inebriated with the plenty of Thy house, and Thou shalt make them drink of the torrent of Thy pleasure” (Ps. xxxv. 9); “They shall shine as the brightness of the firmament” (Dan. xii. 3). Solomon built a temple to Jehovah of unequalled splendour and beauty, but this was but a shadow of the Catholic Church, that holy temple which rose under the almighty hand of its Divine Architect, Jesus Christ, and which St. Paul speaks of as “the house of God” (1 Tim. iii. 15). Of this glorious house the foundations are the Apostles and Prophets, whilst the immovable corner-stone is its Heavenly Founder, Jesus Christ Himself; and the stones of which it is built are not dead but living, being, as they are, all those believers who are incorporated with the Church by faith and love. It is of this Church, founded by the Saviour, that St. Paul again speaks when he writes to the Ephesians: “You are . . . built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone. In whom all the building, being framed together, groweth up into an holy temple in the Lord. In whom you also are built together into an habitation of God in the Spirit” (Eph. ii. 20–22). Holy Scripture records that the stones for the building of Solomon’s temple were all hewn beforehand and carefully prepared, so that in the building itself there was not heard the sound of a hammer, chisel, or any tool of iron (3 Kings vi. 7). How very strikingly are the many trials, sufferings, and exercises of self-abnegation thus set forth, by which our nature is purified, ennobled, and transformed, until, as fitting

stones, we are joined by God's hand into His mystical building—joined there, too, without violence, through the silent operation of the grace of the Holy Spirit, which unites us to one another in the strong bonds of heavenly love.¹

The actual temple of Solomon consisted of two chief parts, according to the design of the tabernacle erected by Moses. These were the "Holy" and the "Holy of Holies." In the latter, which was also called the inner sanctuary, and might be said to correspond to the choir in our own churches, stood the ark of the covenant, with the cherubim on either side; and this, together with the mercy-seat, represented the throne of God. Jehovah is thus not unfrequently called "He who sitteth upon the cherubim." The holy of holies signifies, as has been remarked above (p. 81), the Church in heaven, where the Most High is enthroned above the jubilant choirs of the blessed. Indeed, the holy evangelist St. John actually beheld the temple of God opened in heaven, and the ark of the testament within it (Apoc. xi. 19).

By the ark of the covenant, according to commentators, is signified the glorified body of Jesus Christ; both the natural body which He offered up for the establishment of the new covenant between God and man, and also the mystical body which, in consequence of that covenant, he assumed to Himself. And because in this mystical body, that is to say, amongst the victorious hosts of the saints, the ever blessed and glorious Mother of God holds the first place, so the ark of the covenant is in a special manner a type of her. Within the ark were hidden the tables of the Mosaic law; and Mary, too, kept God's words in her heart.

The other principal division of the temple, the holy, or sanctuary, represents the Church of Christ upon earth. As the holy of holies could not be approached except through the sanctuary, so there is no path to the kingdom of heaven save through the Church. He only can become a member of the Church triumphant who has been a living member of the Church militant. The priests alone were allowed to enter the sanctuary, and, according to St. Peter, all who belong to the Church of Christ are a holy priesthood (1 Pet. ii. 5); for each true Christian is bound to offer a spiritual sacrifice, well-pleasing to God, of faith, hope, and charity, of prayer and mortification. In the sanctuary stood first the altar of incense, overlaid with the purest gold, upon which, morning and evening, the priests burnt precious incense in honour of Jehovah. Upon

¹ This is beautifully expressed in the Vesper-Hymn for the feast of the consecration of a church, and also in the 336th Dialogue of St. Augustine.

one side of this altar was the table of the shewbread, on which stood always twelve loaves of unleavened bread, made of the finest flour, which every Sabbath were eaten by the priests, and replaced by fresh ones. Lastly, upon the other side was the seven-branched candlestick, in which lights were kept always burning day and night by the priests. It was with these sacred objects that the tabernacle had been furnished, by God's command; to them ten more tables for shewbread, and ten golden candlesticks, were added by Solomon. The altar of incense betokens the tribute of prayer which is ever being offered by the Church in union with the continual unbloody sacrifice of Jesus Christ, as a sweet-smelling savour before the throne of the Most High. The loaves of proposition, which, being "holy to the Lord," were thus only to be eaten by the priests in the holy place, signify the heavenly eucharistic bread, which is only to be received by those consecrated to God, the members of the Church, and by them only with clean hearts. The seven-branched candlestick, whose flame perpetually lighted the precincts of the sanctuary, was an image of Jesus Christ, who perpetually enlightens the Church through His doctrine and through the sevenfold grace of the Holy Spirit. The temple was surrounded by a spacious outer court, to which those who were not priests were admitted. Within the precincts of this were the slaughter-houses for the victims; and in the court itself stood the holocaust altar, on which the sacrifices were partly or wholly consumed by fire. These bloody sacrifices, as has been so often already pointed out, were all figures of that infinitely meritorious sacrifice of redemption which was consummated by our Lord Jesus Christ on Mount Calvary. To the left of the holocaust altar was a huge basin of molten brass, nine yards in diameter, called the brazen sea. In this every priest had to wash his hands and feet before entering the sanctuary. And so likewise all who would be received into the communion of the Church must first be cleansed from every stain of sin in the waters of baptism.

When, after seven years' labour, the temple was completed, and stood in all its beauty upon Mount Moria, Solomon assembled all the princes and elders of the kingdom to be present at its solemn consecration. With glad confidence and rejoicing the whole people followed the priests, who bore the ark of the covenant in triumphal procession from Mount Sion to the temple, singing in exultation as they went, the glorious Psalm, "Give praise to the Lord, for He is good: for His mercy endureth for ever." Filled with gratitude for

God's overwhelming benefits, Solomon offered sheep and bullocks without number, and fervently besought the blessing of the Lord upon the new sanctuary. He received a sign that his prayer was granted: fire came down from heaven and consumed the sacrifices, a dark cloud brooded over the ark of the covenant, and the glory of the Lord filled the house of God.

But how great soever was the magnificence of this festival, its splendours fade before that which will at the end of time be celebrated by Jesus Christ, the Conqueror of death and hell, when, accompanied by His glorious hosts of risen warriors clothed in the vesture of immortality, He shall enter into His everlasting kingdom. According to St. Augustine, the consecration of Solomon's temple was but a type of this glorious and blessed festival (*Dialogue*, 337). When the last living stone shall have been placed in the heavenly temple, then Christ shall present His Church glorious and undefiled before His Eternal Father. Tears and sighs shall then cease, and all things breathe but of joy, love, and exultation; and in triumph and thanksgiving the blessed shall sing for evermore, "Give praise to the Lord, for He is good: for His mercy endureth for ever."

"But Solomon did not persevere in well-doing. He took heathen wives, and allowed himself in his old age to be seduced by them into idolatry."

For many years Solomon reigned happily and well. He left behind him writings in which are recorded the treasures of wisdom granted him by God; and these are classed, as well by the Synagogue as by the Christian Church, among the Sacred Scriptures. Such are the Book of Proverbs, the Canticle of Canticles, and the book named Ecclesiastes or Preacher. But nevertheless, in his old age, the great, wise, and happy Solomon "stained his glory."¹ "His heart was turned away by women to follow strange gods; . . . he worshipped Astarthe the goddess of the Sidonians, and Moloch

¹ "Thou hast stained thy glory" (*Eccclus. xlvii. 22*).

the god of the Ammonites, . . . and built a temple for Chamos the idol of Moab, . . . and for Moloch" (3 Kings xi. 4-7). Neither Scripture nor tradition gives us any account of Solomon's repentance at the end of his life. Scripture tells us that the Lord reproached him, and announced to him his punishment, which, for the sake of David his father, was not however to take place during his own lifetime. This punishment was the rending asunder of his kingdom, of which a part was to be given to his servant, because he had broken his covenant with God.

SECTION XVI.

DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM—DESTRUCTION OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL—END OF THE KINGDOM OF JUDA.

"After Solomon's death the kingdom was divided (B.C. 980). The tribes of Juda and Benjamin remained faithful to his son, King Roboam, and founded under him the kingdom of Juda, with Jerusalem as its capital. The remaining tribes chose themselves another king, and took Samaria for the capital of their kingdom, which was thenceforward called the Kingdom of Israel. They forsook altogether the religion of their fathers, built a temple of their own at Samaria, and brought in every abomination of idolatry. For this cause God gave them into the power of the heathen king, Salmanasar, who destroyed the kingdom of Israel for ever, and dragged the people into the Assyrian captivity at Ninive, B.C. 718.¹"

THE punishment threatened by God soon followed on the death of Solomon. His son and successor, Roboam, refused a request, justly and moderately urged, for a diminution of the heavy taxes, and wantonly insulted the representatives of the people. In consequence of this, ten tribes fell away from him, and chose a former servant of Solomon's, Jeroboam, "a valiant and mighty man," for their king. Through this unhappy division two rival kingdoms sprang up, that of Juda, which included also the small tribe of Benjamin, and

¹ According to the reckoning in "*L'Art de Vérifier les Dates*," others say 721 or 722.

that of Israel, which consisted of the other ten tribes. Fearing lest his subjects might turn from him to the king of Juda, if allowed to go on pilgrimage to the temple at Jerusalem, the king of Israel, in blind folly, forbade his people to worship there, and led them instead into open idolatry. At Dan and Bethel, the northern and southern extremities of his kingdom, he set up golden calves, and appointed idolatrous priests instead of the Levites. He thus laid the foundation of his own and his people's destruction. The Most High failed not to warn him of the heavy judgments which were hanging over him and over his house. But Jeroboam would not repent, and the kings who reigned after him trod in his footsteps. One of them, Achab, who took to wife Jezabel, the daughter of the king of Sidon, carried evil-doing to its utmost limits. He erected a temple to the abominable Baal in Samaria, the new capital of Israel, and instituted Phœnician idolatry as the religion of the state. The greater part of the people worshipped Baal, and grovelled in all the crimes and abominations of Paganism. The warnings of the Lord were given in vain; Israel hardened his heart, but the time of God's vengeance drew near. Salmanasar, the king of Assyria, invaded the land with a great army; he besieged Samaria during three years, reduced it to a heap of ruins, bound its king in chains, and relentlessly carried the nobles of the land and the greater number of the people into captivity in Media and Assyria. In order that the newly-conquered land might not become an utter waste, heathen families, from the empire of Assyria, were sent to settle there. These mixed with the Israelites who had remained behind, and later on became blended into one people, who were known by the name of Samaritans.

“The kingdom of Juda was also punished by the Lord for its many backslidings. Nabuchodonosor conquered Jerusalem (B.C. 606), burned the temple, and led the people into the captivity of Babylon. But the kingdom of Juda was not destroyed for ever, like that of Israel, which had apostatised from the true God.”

The kingdom of Juda, on whose throne the family of

David still reigned, and in which was the national sanctuary and the priesthood of Aaron, lasted one hundred and thirty years longer than the neighbouring kingdom of Israel, and though many calamities befel it, saw on the whole much better and happier days. Within three years Roboam, with the greater part of his people, had turned aside from God's law. Most of the kings followed his example, did evil, and offered sacrifice to idols. But amongst them were some who feared the true God, and were zealous for His worship. Such were Asa, Josaphat, Ezechias, and Josias, and these strove to banish heathen abominations from the land. According as Juda was governed by good or bad princes, and according as the people served God faithfully or turned aside to idols, so was the kingdom happy or unhappy,—protected by God, or given over helpless into the hands of its enemies. That God had thus decreed was proved by many events. Sennacherib the great king of Assyria, with his whole army, invaded Juda during the reign of the pious King Ezechias. With insults and blasphemies he called on Jerusalem to surrender. Ezechias prayed fervently to the God of Israel, and the same night the angel of the Lord slew 185,000 men in the Assyrian camp. Manasses, on the other hand, who had defiled the temple by the erection of altars to idols, had offered his own son as a burnt-sacrifice in their honour, and had shed innocent blood without measure, was loaded with chains, and led to Babylon. There, in his great misery, he entered into himself, “he prayed to the Lord his God, and did penance exceedingly before the God of his fathers.” God heard his prayer, and brought him back to Jerusalem, and set him on the throne of David. But, after the death of his most pious grandson, Josias, the crimes of the princes and people increased to a fearful extent, and in their unaccountable blindness they drew down upon themselves the divine judgments, “till the wrath of the Lord rose against His people, and there was no remedy” (2 Paralip. xxxvi. 16).

Nabuchodonosor, the proud king of the newly-founded

empire of Babylon, was appointed to chastise the degenerate Jewish nation. In the fourth year of the reign of Joakim, he marched with his hosts upon Jerusalem, which he took by storm, seized a part of the precious vessels in the temple, and led many of the nobles into captivity in Babylon. After a few years he returned again to the Jewish capital, plundered the temple a second time, and led the young king Joachin, or Jechonias, together with the bravest and noblest among the people, captive to Babylon.

But it was under Sedecias, who had been installed as king by Nabuchodonosor, that the destruction of Juda was to be completed. Contrary to agreement, he refused to pay tribute to the conqueror. Upon this, Nabuchodonosor, bringing with him death and destruction in his train, marched upon Jerusalem, encamped before it with his whole force, and besieged it for a year and a half. The misery and want in the city during this time was terrible. At last it was taken by storm, and the inhabitants put to the sword. Sedecias fled with his family, but in vain. God's vengeance overtook him, and he was taken prisoner. His sons were all murdered before his eyes, and he himself was blinded and led a captive to Babylon (B.C. 588). The splendid temple of Solomon, the royal castle, the magnificent city of God, fell a prey to the flames. A smoking heap of dust and ruins alone marked the place where the Lord had reigned. Such inhabitants as had escaped the fire and sword, were taken, with the remainder of the treasure of the temple, to Babylon.

SECTION XVII.

GOD'S PATIENCE—OF THE PROPHETS IN GENERAL, AND OF SOME IN PARTICULAR.

“These severe punishments did not come by any means suddenly or unexpectedly. Prophets, men enlightened by God, had announced them long before, in order to move the people to repentance, and had confirmed their words by miracles. They promised also grace to the repentant, and foretold the coming of the Redeemer. In the books written by them several

centuries before His coming, we read all the circumstances of our Lord's life and passion: His birth of a virgin in Bethlehem; His preaching, His miracles, His sufferings, His death, His resurrection, the sending of the Holy Ghost, the destruction of Jerusalem, the conversion of the heathen, and the splendour of the Christian Church. Even the year in which the Saviour should come was indicated by Daniel. Amongst the prophets, the most remarkable are Elias, Eliseus, Isaias, Jeremias, Ezechiel, and Daniel."

THE terrible destruction of the Jewish nation may well bring to our minds those words of Scripture, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. x. 31). And yet God's goodness and patience were never set forth more evidently than in the judgments which He inflicted upon His people.

Notwithstanding their repeated offences against Him, notwithstanding their untiring obstinacy in evil, He yet withheld the arm of avenging justice, and ceased not from manifesting His goodness towards them, in order that He might draw them to Himself through love. It seemed as though His fatherly tenderness shrank from inflicting chastisement on the nation whom He had chosen. And when at last His justice might no longer be appeased, He punished them less heavily than the greatness of their misdeeds had merited. How beautifully and touchingly does the Lord Himself bear witness to this in the Holy Scriptures: "I was like a foster-father to Ephraim" (to the children of Israel), He says; "I carried them in my arms. . . . I will draw them . . . with the bands of love. . . . How shall I deal with thee, O Ephraim, . . . how shall I make thee as Adama, shall I set thee as Seboim?" (cities that were destroyed with Sodom and Gomorrha by fire from heaven); "My heart is turned within Me, My repentance is stirred up. I will not execute the fierceness of My wrath: I will not return to destroy Ephraim: because I am God, and not man" (Osee xi.).

God's loving compassion towards Israel was especially manifested by His sending to them, one after another, men inspired by the Holy Ghost, who might rouse the blinded people from the sleep of sin, snatch them from the brink of

the abyss, and by leading them back repentant to the Lord, delay the threatened judgment. These men so chosen by God—the prophets—proved their mission by the powers which they received from Him of working miracles and of foretelling the future. In the fulfilment of their calling they feared neither prison nor death. They denounced idolatry with unshaken boldness, zealously called upon the people to do penance, and gave stern warning to the rebellious of the coming judgments of God. To the pious Israelites also, who were bowed down beneath the weight of growing evil, they revealed the consoling promises of the Most High;—their speedy return, namely, to their own land, the gracious advent of the longed-for Redeemer, the future victory over sin and death, and the glory of the kingdom of the Messias.

There had indeed been at all times certain men distinguished by the gift of prophecy, but never had they been so numerous, never were their voices so distinct, and never, since the days of Moses and Josue, did they perform wonders so astonishing as in the unhappy period of which we are now speaking.¹ Some, like Elias, Eliseus, and Jonas lived before the destruction of the kingdom of Israel; others, like Isaias, between that and the Babylonish captivity. The ministry again of others, such as Jeremias, Baruch, Ezechiel, and Daniel, fell during the captivity itself; whilst it was after the return that Aggeus, Zacharias, and Malachias were raised up.

With these last, the line of the prophets closes (about 450 B.C.). Compare ii. 174 or 173.

It was not all the prophets who were directed by God to write down their visions and revelations; some only have left to posterity, a part of their oral teaching. Those whose writings we still possess are the four greater and the twelve lesser prophets, together with Baruch, the writer of the prophecies of Jeremias. They are named

¹ We are told in the first book of Kings (x. 5) of “a company of prophets” who existed in the time of Samuel. The word prophet is not always used in the strict sense, and here signifies the disciples of prophets, of whom there were some under Elias and Eliseus.

greater and lesser according to the larger or smaller compass of the prophecies which they have left behind them. Holy Scripture presents them to us in the following order:—The greater being Isaias, Jeremias (with Baruch), Ezechiel, and Daniel. The lesser, Osee, Joel, Amos, Abdias, Jonas, Micheas, Nahum, Habacuc, Sophonias, Aggeus, Zacharias, and Malachias. It was not only the future judgments which awaited the kingdoms of Juda and Israel that the prophets foretold; they prophesied also the chastisements with which God would visit the surrounding nations, the decay of empires then most flourishing, and the utter destruction of Ninive and Babylon, cities unrivalled for their power and dominion. The prophecies which to us as Christians are most interesting are those concerning our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and this would have been the place in which to quote such passages at length, and show the manner in which they have been fulfilled. This, however, already has been done in the second volume of this work, pp. 156 to 180 and 189, or 154 to 179 and 188.

Something yet remains to be said with regard to certain of the prophets in particular.

Amongst the many who at this time glorified God by their lives, Elias stands forth pre-eminent. He, like St. John the Baptist after him, converted many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, and thus was worthy to be a type of that great forerunner of Jesus Christ, the first and greatest of all the prophets, and to be recognised as such by the archangel Gabriel, when, in announcing to Zacharias the birth of his son, he promised that he should “go before him in the spirit and power of Elias.” But Elias was called, too, to a yet higher honour; the zeal which consumed him, the miracles which marked his life and actions, make him in a most especial manner a type of Jesus Christ. Compared with that of our Divine Lord indeed, his zeal seems stern and prompt in inflicting merited punishment; this does not however obliterate the resemblance, but serves only to show us that the spirit of fear predominated beneath

the old covenant, as does that of love beneath the new. Thus, we find Elias, burning with zeal for the honour of God, slaying four hundred and fifty of the priests of Baal, and destroying by fire from heaven two bands of fifty men each, which had been sent out against him by the wicked King Ochozias; whilst Christ on the contrary, when His disciples asked leave to command fire from heaven to destroy a city of the Samaritans where they had been refused admittance, reproved them, saying, "You know not of what spirit you are" (Luke ix. 55), and Himself prayed for forgiveness from His Heavenly Father for those who crucified Him. But a glance at the history of Elias suggests to us many most remarkable resemblances between him and our Divine Lord. Like the Redeemer, Elias was blasphemed, persecuted, and sought after to be slain by the enemies of God. Like the Redeemer too, he spent forty days and forty nights fasting in the wilderness. Like Him, he raised to life the son of a widow; and like Him, too, was carried into heaven within sight of his disciples. And as Christ did not through His ascension leave His followers desolate, but imparted to them in yet fuller measure the gift of miracles and the treasures of grace contained within the Church, so Elias also left his wonder-working mantle with his beloved disciple Eliseus, and entreated God that His own spirit might rest upon him.

No type, however, perfectly sets forth the reality. It was by His own power that Christ ascended; but Elias was carried upwards in a chariot of fire by the intervention of God. Again, Christ entered into heaven His kingdom of glory; Elias, on the contrary, could not enter there, because heaven was then closed, but was conducted to an unknown place, whence, says Pope St. Gregory the Great (Hom. xxix. Sup. Evan.), "he will come forth at the end of time to pay the debt of death."

Eliseus, who had been called by God to carry on the work of Elias, also performed great miracles. Holy Scripture says concerning him that "in his life he did great wonders, and in death he wrought miracles" (Ecclus. xlviii. 15). The waters of the Jordan drew back at his approach. He

changed an unwholesome spring into a wholesome one. He miraculously multiplied bread and oil, deprived certain poisonous plants of their hurtful qualities, cured the leprosy of Naaman the Syrian, struck the son of the Syrian king with blindness, and again restored his sight. Much of the future lay open to his prophetic spirit. On his death-bed he foretold to King Joas three great victories over the Assyrians. After his death his bones retained miraculous power. A corpse which, through fear at the approach of robbers, had been hastily cast into his grave, hardly touched the relics of the prophet when it returned to life.

In the opinion of the holy Fathers, Eliseus also is a type of our Lord. "As," says St. Augustine,¹ "we behold in blessed Elias a type of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we also confidently believe Him to have been prefigured also by Eliseus." This analogy is held by the Fathers to lie especially in the healing of Naaman's leprosy, which has been already spoken of (iv. 148, 149), and again in the raising of the son of the Sunamite woman.² This woman had been deprived by death of her only son, and hastened for help to Eliseus. The prophet sent a servant with his staff, desiring him to lay it on the face of the boy. The servant did so, but without effect. After much entreaty, Eliseus came himself to the house. Then he himself "lay upon the child: and he put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands; and he bowed himself upon him, and the child's flesh grew warm. Then he returned and walked in the house, once to and fro; and he went up, and lay upon him" (4 Kings iv. 34, 35), and the child's life was restored to him.

The mysterious manner in which Eliseus recalled the boy to life is symbolical of God's dealings with mankind, in awakening within them anew the life of grace. First, in

¹ Augustinus, *Serm. de Temp.* 206, or Cæsarius, in *Appendice*, St. August., *Serm.* 42.

² Cyprian, *Ep.* 59, ad. Fidum. Ephrem. in 4 *Regum.*, cap. 4; Augustine, *Serm.* 26, 136 et alibi; Ambrosius, *Ep.* 81, Prosper de *Promiss. et Prædicat. Dei.*, p. 2, cap. xxxi.; Gregorius Mag. *Moral.*, lib. 9, cap. xl., and many others.

compassion, He sent His servant Moses to oppose sin through the law.¹ But the old covenant wanted the power to rekindle the extinguished life of grace. It was needful that the Most High should "empty Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men" (Phil. ii. 7). And as the prophet did not raise the boy the first time to life, but walked up and down in the house, and bowed himself twice over the child's body, so it was not at the incarnation of Jesus Christ, that the redemption of the world was completed. For thirty-three years the Saviour walked upon earth amongst men, and only then advanced to the fulfilment of His glorious work, when in the greatness of His love, He stretched Himself on the shameful and painful cross; thus likening Himself to us in death, and through the death of His sacred body accomplishing the raising of our souls from the death of sin to the life of grace.

It was the kingdom of Israel that God appointed to be the scene of the ministry of these two great prophets, Elias and Eliseus. In this distracted country, where one wicked king succeeded to another, in which the priests of the Lord were banished, and the people led astray by false prophets and the priests of Baal, God willed to manifest in their greatest splendour His power and glory. These prophets performed their miraculous works among the heathen also. The widow in whose behalf Elias multiplied the corn and oil, and whose son also he raised to life, dwelt in the Phœnician city of Sarephta. Naaman, whose leprosy Eliseus cleansed, was a heathen captain. Eliseus, too, gave notice to Syrian kings in Damascus of what should in future befall them. Jonas, whose mission was before that of Elias and Eliseus, was sent directly by God to the heathen. The Lord told him to go to the famous city of Ninive, whose pride was an

¹ The majority of the Fathers see in the staff which Eliseus gave the servant the Mosaic law. Cæsarius compares it to the rod of Moses. "God sent Moses," says he, "with the staff to Egypt. The staff alone, without Christ, might suffice to smite Egypt, but could not free it from original, or turn it from actual, sin. He who had sent the staff must Himself come."

abomination in the sight of God, to announce the speedy destruction which was to come upon it, and to call it to repentance. The prophet Jonas is especially remarkable as being in a particular manner a type of the Messias. Our Lord pointed this out Himself, when He said to the Scribes and Pharisees, "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh a sign; and a sign shall not be given it but the sign of Jonas the prophet. For as Jonas was in the whale's belly three days and three nights, so shall the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights" (Matt. xii. 39, 40). And as Jonas after three days came forth unhurt from the belly of the whale, so too, after three days did Christ come forth unhurt from the grave. The Fathers attach deep meaning to other circumstances in the life of Jonas, in which God's special providence may be recognised. (1.) Jonas was sent from God to the capital of the Assyrian empire to bring about in it a conversion of heart and of life. Christ also was sent by the Father into the world to lead it from the way of destruction back to God. (2.) Jonas offered himself to be thrown into the sea, to save others from death. Christ freely offered Himself to suffer death that He might rescue man from eternal death. (3.) At the warning of Jonas "the men of Ninive believed in God, and they proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least, . . . and they were turned from their evil way" (Jon. iii. 5, 10). The heathen nations, too, upon the preaching of the Gospel, confessed the true God, did penance, and followed gladly the way of everlasting salvation.

But little has come down to us concerning the life of the prophet Isaias. He was called to exercise the office of a prophet in the year of the death of King Ozias, one hundred and fifty-three years before the Captivity. He prophesied in the kingdom of Juda, under four successive kings, and died apparently the death of a martyr, under the impious Manasses, at whose command it probably was that he was sawn asunder. Isaias occupies the first place among those of the prophets who have left behind them writings. The

scope and importance of his prophecies, the inspired beauty of his language, and his noble simplicity of style, have gained for him the name of the "King of the Prophets." Holy Scripture honours his memory by speaking of him as "the Great Prophet" (Ecclus. xlviii. 25). The holy Fathers call him "a Foreteller of the Gospel, an Evangelist." He speaks indeed so clearly and circumstantially of the coming Redeemer and of the Church His kingdom, that he might be imagined, as St. Jerome says (Ep. ad Paulin.), "to have written not a prophecy but a Gospel." His predictions are for the most part addressed to the Jews; but Babylon, Moab, Damascus, Egypt, and Tyre also learned their fate from him. A century and a half beforehand he described Cyrus, the Persian king, by name, picturing him as one who was to "subdue nations before his face," to "humble the great ones of the earth," and to rebuild Jerusalem (Isa. xlv. 28, xlv. 1, 2).

Jeremias was sprung from the priestly stock, and first saw light at Anathoth, near Jerusalem. Sanctified from his mother's womb, he remained always unmarried, and received in his youth, forty-two years before the destruction of Jerusalem, his vocation to the office of a prophet, which he faithfully followed till death. His lot was cast in those unhappy days when idolatry, with all its attendant vices and abominations, had corrupted the whole land, and was bringing it to ruin. It was his office to announce the truth to a blinded and stiff-necked people. Like "a fortified city, and a pillar of iron, and a wall of brass, over all the land, to the kings of Juda, to the princes thereof," he was set over against them (Jer. i. 18). And for this, contempt and shame, persecution and imprisonment, were his lot. After the unhappy fall of Jerusalem—and it was only as though by miracle that he escaped the death which continually threatened him—he preferred to dwell among the smoking ruins of the city and temple, and there pour forth his sorrowful heart before the Lord, in his moving song of lamentation, than to accept the brilliant offers of the con-

queror. When afterwards, the tributary king was slain by Nabuchodonosor, and the remaining Jews fled out of fear into Egypt, he was forced to accompany them. In Egypt he continued to preach against the idolatry of his nation, and was, according to an old tradition, stoned to death by the Jews themselves. It is at least certain, that those prophets whom the Jews put to death were for the most part stoned; hence Christ Himself reproaches Jerusalem with having killed the prophets, and stoned them that were sent unto her (Matt. xxiii. 37). In the persecuted and sorrowful life of the prophet Jeremias, the holy Fathers see foreshadowed that of Jesus Christ, and therefore the moving picture drawn by the prophet of his sufferings, they understand, in a higher sense, as referring to the sufferings of the Divine Redeemer.¹

Ezekiel, like Jeremias, was born of the priestly stock. He was amongst those Jews who, at the second taking of Jerusalem, and eleven years before its destruction, were led with King Joachin into captivity in Babylon. In the fifth year of his exile he was filled with the Spirit of God, and called to the office of a prophet. He laboured in this high but difficult calling, until at least the sixteenth year after Jerusalem had been destroyed. He foretold the approaching ruin of the reprobate city, and exhorted men with burning zeal to penance and conversion. He also consoled and encouraged the afflicted people with promises of mercy, and with prophecies of a joyful and glorious future, in which Israel should return from his hard captivity, and the new and splendid kingdom of the Messiah should arise. He foretold also the dreadful punishments which awaited the neighbouring nations, those proud enemies of the house of Jacob. The language of this prophet abounds in imagery under which he sets forth the Divine revelations. It was his peculiarity to prophesy not so much by words as by symbolical actions. Thus, in order to signify that a portion

¹ See Allioli upon Jeremias xi. 19 : "I was as a meek lamb, that is carried to be a victim;" and on the Lamentations iii. 1.

of the Jews were to perish by famine and pestilence, a portion by the sword, whilst a remnant would be led into captivity, he cut off his hair and beard, consumed one third by fire, cut another third to pieces with a sword, and strewed the rest upon the wind. The words of St. Stephen to the Jews were true of Ezechiel also: "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? And they have slain them who foretold of the coming of the Just One; of whom you have been now the betrayers and murderers" (Acts vii. 52). For, according to an old tradition, he was put to death by a Jewish judge whom he had rebuked for idolatry.

Daniel, who was apparently of royal blood, was taken, after the first capture of Jerusalem, with other noble youths to the court of Nabuchodonosor, and there, under the name of Baltassar, was brought up, with three companions of his own age, in the king's service. Under God's visible protection his great natural gifts became developed to the utmost; and whilst he became learned in all the wisdom of the Chaldeans, he remained ever faithful to the Divine law. The supernatural gift which he possessed of interpreting dreams, gained him the highest consideration from King Nabuchodonosor, by whom he was placed over all the wise men of Babylon. After the city was taken, he was raised by the Median king, Darius (Cyaxares the Second), who then ruled over Babylon, to one of the three highest dignities of the empire. And when, after the death of Darius, his nephew Cyrus united beneath himself the Persian, Median, and Assyrian empires, Daniel was his friend and sat at his table. But the splendour and power by which the prophet was surrounded, did not save him from partaking of the cup of sorrow. The hatred of rivals and enemies more than once placed him in danger of his life, and each time he was saved by the miraculous interposition of God.

In a vision which appeared to Nabuchodonosor, of a figure compounded of gold, silver, brass, iron, and clay—and in another wherein he himself saw four beasts come up out of the sea—Daniel beheld the four great kingdoms which

were to succeed one another in the dominion of the world ; and after whose days the kingdom of the Messiah would be established. He prophesied also of the Messiah, that all kings should serve and obey Him ; and of His kingdom, that it should never be taken away from Him, and should endure for all eternity.

In a vision too, he saw the Medo-Persian kingdom destroyed by the Greek king Alexander the Great, the empire of that great conqueror himself split into four parts after his death, and one of these parts given to the impious King Antiochus Epiphanes, who was to make war upon the people of God, waste the place of the sanctuary, and put many to death. The most important prophecy of Daniel is that in which he predicts the time of the advent of Christ, the year of His death, and the lasting destruction of the holy city and temple, which was to follow upon it. (Vol. ii. pp. 158-168, or 157-166.)

SECTION XVIII.

THE JEWS IN CAPTIVITY—THEIR RETURN—REBUILDING OF THE CITY AND TEMPLE.

“As examples of special virtue during the time of the captivity, the following were the most remarkable :—At Ninive, Tobias ; and at Babylon, the chaste Susanna, the three young men in the fiery furnace, and Daniel in the lions’ den.”

As the punishments with which God visited His faithless people reveal, not His justice only, but His goodness and longsuffering also ; so they serve, too, to show us that wonderful wisdom, through which evil is turned to good, and the loss of one made to further the salvation of another ;—the scattering of the Israelites among the heathen, which was the just punishment of their sins, serving not only for their own trial and purification, but also, as it is most important we should notice, in bringing the heathen nations, sunk in error as they were, to the knowledge and confession of the true God. “Give glory to the Lord,” said Tobias, speaking to

the children of Israel, "and praise Him in the sight of the Gentiles: Because He hath therefore scattered you among the Gentiles who know not Him, that you may declare His wonderful works, and make them know that there is no other Almighty God besides Him" (Tob. xiii. 3, 4). From their intercourse with the Israelites, the heathen learned to know the wonderful destiny of this nation, which, when it served Jehovah, was always fortunate, whilst on turning away from Him it was invariably overtaken by evil. In this way, too, they heard of the teachings of the prophets, and of their calls to penance, and were warned of the terrible punishments which would come upon them if they should continue in their impiety and forgetfulness of God. And what a wholesome impression must have been made on them by the virtuous example of God's pious servants, whose numbers now were continually increasing. They saw the God-fearing Tobias, leading a blameless life amidst universal corruption; they saw him miraculously healed of his blindness, richly blessed by God; and heard also doubtless, of the heavenly messenger by whom his son was accompanied and protected upon his journey. In Susanna, unjustly accused and wonderfully cleared of blame, a pattern was set before them of conjugal faith, and a striking instance furnished of God's justice, in this open reward of virtue and punishment of crime.

If by the sight of virtue, men are themselves impelled to practise it, examples so bright cannot have failed to produce their effect on the minds of the heathen.

If we call to mind the many and great miracles which were wrought by Jehovah in behalf of the Israelites, the fame of which must doubtless have been spread far and wide, we cannot question the salutary influence which their contact with the chosen people must have exercised on the heathen. They would have heard of the three youths who, in consequence of their refusal to give divine honour to a golden statue, were cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace, within which they walked unhurt, and "as with

one mouth praised and . . . glorified God." They would have heard, too, of the miraculous escape of Daniel, who was thrown into the lions' den without being even touched by the fierce beasts; while his enemies, who were afterwards cast into it as a just punishment, were instantly seized and devoured. When the worshippers of the dragon saw their god perish so miserably at Daniel's touch, it must have completely disabused them of their unhallowed superstition. And again, in what striking contrast to the fraud and impotence of their own magi, must have appeared to them the inspired wisdom of Daniel, when they heard the interpretation of the mysterious visions of Nabuchodonosor and Baltassar, which he alone could furnish, and to the truth of which the fate of both these mighty kings so soon bore testimony. The proud Nabuchodonosor himself, who had commanded his subjects to worship and glorify Bel, under pain of death, was forced to acknowledge the power and unlimited dominion of the true God. In a writing, which he addressed to all peoples, nations, and tongues who live upon the whole earth, he announces that the Most High God, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and whose rule lasts for ever and ever, had done wonders and signs toward him, and made a decree that any "people, tribe, or tongue which shall speak blasphemy against the God of Sidrach . . . shall be destroyed, and their houses laid waste" (Dan. iii. 95-100). Darius, the Mede, also a successor of Nabuchodonosor, overcome by the wonders that the Lord wrought before his eyes, issued his commands to all tribes, nations, and tongues dwelling on the whole earth, that in all his empire and kingdom all men should "dread and fear the God of Daniel. For He is the living and eternal God for ever; and His kingdom shall not be destroyed, and His power shall be for ever" (Dan. vi. 26).

"The Babylonian captivity had lasted seventy years, when the Persian king, Cyrus, the conqueror of Babylon, by God's inspiration, gave permission to the Jews to return to their own land (B.C. 536), and to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem."

The kingdom of Juda was to be chastised, but not destroyed for ever. God's providence had decreed that it should last until the coming of the Redeemer, to prepare His way before Him, and to preserve the knowledge of the true God upon earth. The return of the Jewish people into the land of their fathers, and the rebuilding of the temple, had been frequently and solemnly announced by the prophets; and Jeremias had expressly foretold that the Babylonian captivity should last seventy years only, and that "when these seventy years shall be expired, I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity" (Jer. xxv. 12).

And so it befell. God's decree went forth upon Babylon. The immense and splendid capital, which, fenced as it was by lofty walls and guarded by two hundred and fifty strong towers, had imagined itself in its pride the imperishable mistress of the world, was now taken by Cyrus, and in the year 536 B.C., the first of his reign in Babylon, and the seventieth after the taking of Jerusalem, he published throughout his whole kingdom the following decree:—"The Lord, the God of heaven, hath given to me all the kingdoms of the earth, and He hath charged me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judea. Who is there among you of all his people? His God be with him. Let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judea, and build the house of the Lord the God of Israel, He is the God that is in Jerusalem" (1 Esdras i. 2, 3). Yet it was not all the children of the captivity who were ready to exchange their new home for the old one. Only forty-two thousand men, mostly of the tribes of Juda and Benjamin, with their men-servants and maid-servants, left the land of bondage and returned to Jerusalem. They were led by Zorobabel, a descendant of David, and accompanied by Josue, the high priest. On reaching the holy city they raised an altar to the God of Israel, and offered daily the burnt-sacrifices prescribed by law. Impatient to see the temple of the Lord in their midst, they begun their work with zeal. They gave gold and silver willingly, according

to their power, to defray the cost of the building; they assembled workmen and made agreement with the Sidonians to have cedar wood brought from Lebanon, and so it came to pass that two years after their arrival the foundation-stone of the new temple was laid. Well may they have thought on this joyful festival, of the days when they sat by the waters of Babylon, and wept when they remembered Sion" (Ps. cxxxvi.). And now, amidst the glad sound of trumpets and cymbals, they sang together songs of praise and thanks to the Lord, "because He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever towards Israel."

"Before long the second temple was completed. And when the grey-headed men wept that it should be so far behind the first temple in magnificence, the prophet Aggeus announced to them that its glory should far exceed that of the former house, for that within it should enter the Messiah, the Desired of all nations" (Agg. ii. 8-10).

The Israelites who returned from their banishment had no sooner begun the building of the temple, than hindrances arose to thwart their zeal and put their patience to the proof. The Samaritans viewed with jealousy this grand national undertaking of the Jews, and endeavoured by false accusations to create distrust and suspicion at the Persian court, in order to stop the building. Darius Hystaspes, however, at last ordered it to be completed at the royal expense, and even threatened with death any who should attempt to interfere with the execution of this command, adding the significant words, "May . . . the God of Israel . . . destroy all kingdoms, and the people that shall put out their hand to resist and to destroy the house of God that is in Jerusalem" (1 Esdras vi. 12). But the greater the difficulties with which they had had to contend in the building, the greater was their joy when, in the year 515 B.C., the temple was at last completed, and solemnly consecrated. Compared with the wonderful splendour of Solomon's temple, this new house of God was poor and unadorned. The golden and silver vessels, to the number of five thousand four hundred, which Nabuchodonosor had taken from the

first temple, were indeed brought back. But the holy of holies remained empty. The ark of the covenant, with the tables of the law, which Jeremias had hidden in a cave in Mount Nebo (2 Mach. ii.), to save them from profanation, were never found again. In size, too, the second temple was inferior to the first, so that even when the foundations were laid, and all the younger generation rejoiced, old men, who had seen the splendour of Solomon's temple, wept aloud at the contrast. But for this second and plainer sanctuary a distinction of a far different kind had been reserved by the Most High, which, for the consolation of His people, He announced to them by the prophet Aggeus: "Take courage, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord of Hosts. . . . Yet one little while, and I will move the heaven and the earth. . . . And the Desired of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory. . . . Great shall be the glory of this last house more than of the first, . . . and in this place I will give peace" (Agg. ii. 5-10).

After the temple with labour and difficulty had been rebuilt, the city of Jerusalem, with its walls, battlements, and towers, was likewise restored amidst trouble and opposition. The Samaritans, seeing that in spite of treachery and intrigue the building only progressed the faster, proceeded at last to use force, and, taking up arms, advanced on Jerusalem. But the Jews, full of confidence in God's protection, boldly repulsed them. Some of the young men, girded with their swords, laboured at the building of the strong walls and towers, whilst others stood round, fully armed for fight, with coats of mail, shields, spears, and bows. Even of the builders and those who carried burthens, each, "with one of his hands did the work, and with the other held a sword" (2 Esdras iv.). And when the enemies without saw the walls in a short time completed, and all their attempts foiled, they were afraid, "and were cast down within themselves, for they perceived that this work was the work of God" (Ibid. vi. 16).

How beautifully does the toilsome building of the temple

and of the earthly Jerusalem represent to us the hard battle and the many trials which Christ's Church, the spiritual Jerusalem, has had to encounter in her foundation and her growth. Hell enraged, armed herself against her with fire and sword for mortal combat; but the Church victoriously stood the test. Consumed with rage and shame, her enemies were obliged to surrender, and recognise in her the work of God. This resemblance of the earthly to the spiritual Jerusalem is not accidental; throughout the Scripture the former is ever placed before us as a true image and type of the latter. Thus we see that when Isaias, Jeremias, Ezechiel, and others of the prophets, foretold the return of the Jews to Jerusalem, and the rebuilding of the temple, their vision extended to the far future, to the Church of Jesus Christ militant here and triumphant hereafter. So, too, it was with the old man Tobias. Whilst he announced prophetically the return of the captives, and the rebuilding of the holy city, he made use at the same time of language much of which can only apply to the Church of Christ. Thus he says that Jerusalem shall "rejoice for ever and ever." . . . And again, "The Gentiles shall leave their idols, and shall come into Jerusalem, and shall dwell in it." And again, "All the kings of the earth shall rejoice in it, adoring the King of Israel" (the Messias). Then, filled with lofty inspiration, he thus apostrophises the holy city: "Thou shalt shine with a glorious light; and all the ends of the earth shall worship thee. . . . Thou shalt rejoice in thy children, because they shall all be blessed, and shall be gathered together to the Lord. Blessed are all they that love thee, and that rejoice in thy peace." And then, passing on to the heavenly Jerusalem, the Church triumphant, in which what is now the Church militant will be one day incorporated, he describes her exactly as did, seven hundred years later, the beloved disciple St. John. The gates of Jerusalem shall be built of sapphire and of emerald, and all the walls thereof round about of precious stones. All its streets shall be paved with white and clean stones:

and Alleluia shall be sung in its streets" (Tob. xiii., xiv.). Who else are these pure and precious stones but the saints of heaven, who shine with the splendour of all glorious virtues? Nevertheless, because the eyes of the Jews have been ever fixed on earthly things, this mystical meaning has remained hidden from them, and they live to this day in expectation of a Messiah, who shall make them lords of an earthly Jerusalem, glittering with gold and gems, and shall place beneath their feet the kings and nations of the world.

SECTION XIX.

REFORM OF ABUSES—REPENTANCE OF THE PEOPLE, AND RENEWAL OF THE COVENANT—PERSECUTION OF ANTIOCHUS—HEROISM OF THE MACHABEES—ULTIMATE FATE OF THE JEWISH KINGDOM.

"The worship of God as prescribed by the law of Moses was now restored by Esdras and Nehemias. The sacred writings were collected together, and were thenceforth diligently read and explained to the people. The whole nation wept and did penance."

IN the eighteenth year after the return of the Jews for its sins to their own land, Esdras, a divinely-inspired priest and teacher, was set over the new colony as judge and ruler, by Artaxerxes the Persian king, by whom he was empowered also to re-establish all things appertaining to the service of God. Twelve years later he was joined by another of God's servants, Nehemias, who in Babylon had filled the high office of cup-bearer to the king. To him Artaxerxes gave authority to rebuild the ruinous walls of the holy city, furnishing him at the same time with means for defraying the expenses. These holy men found, to their great sorrow, that much evil had already crept in among the people. Contrary to the law of Moses, they had contracted many marriages among the heathen; they followed their trades openly, and performed servile work on the Sabbath days, and usurers shamefully oppressed the poor. A prompt remedy was needed for these abuses. Esdras and Nehemias, therefore,

summoned the children of Israel to Jerusalem, and read to them from the books of Moses the law of God. The eyes of the people were thus opened to the errors of which they had been guilty. Full of sorrow and compunction, they did penance. Clad in mourning garments, with ashes on their heads, fasting, and with their faces to the ground, they acknowledged with tears their own sins and the sins of their fathers. They put away their strange wives, forgave the debts of the poor, and closed the gates of the city on the Sabbath day, so that occasion for its desecration might not be given by the traders who were waiting outside the walls. As a standing bond whereby they might assure themselves of that happiness which they knew to depend upon their observance of God's law, they solemnly entered into a covenant by which they bound themselves to be faithful to God ; and this covenant was committed to writing, and sealed by the princes, the priests, and the Levites. They moreover swore upon the same day that they would walk in the law of God which He had given them by Moses, and that they would keep and perform every commandment of the Lord, and observe His rites and ceremonies (2 Esdras x. 29).

“ The people never returned again to that worship of idols which had involved them in the hard sufferings of the captivity. When, at a later period, Antiochus, king of Syria, endeavoured to force them to do so, they offered the most heroic resistance, under the leadership of the priest, Mathathias and his sons. Many, inspired by the example of the old man Eleazar, and of the seven Machabees and their brave mother, preferred rather than yield to suffer the most painful death ” (B.C. 170-143).

The time had not yet arrived when the Jews returned from the captivity, for them to be formed anew into an independent nation. For more than two hundred years after their return to the Land of Promise (from 536-330 B.C.), they lived under the dominion of Persia, and were forced regularly to pay a prescribed tribute to the Persian kings. A turning-point was formed in their history by the rise of Alexander the Great, of whom it was that Daniel had prophesied that he should come with his hosts over the face

of the whole earth, without touching the ground. When the Greek conqueror had gained repeated victories over Darius Codomanus, the king of Persia, there was no power left upon earth that was able to hinder his progress. He shattered the Persian monarchy, "slew the kings of the earth, and took the spoils of many nations: and the earth was quiet before him" (1 Mac. i.). Palestine was also annexed to his immense empire, but after his death became tributary first to Egypt and then to Syria. Many thousands of Jewish families were at this time transplanted to Egypt and to Asia Minor. They kept up, however, the closest union with their mother country, and remained faithful to the law of Moses.¹ In Judea also, the people, mindful of the punishments which had fallen on their fathers, continued for the most part in the worship of the true God; but they did not altogether escape the ill results of contact with the surrounding heathen. Since the Greeks had obtained dominion over Asia, their religion and customs together with their language had spread, and the hurtful effects of this foreign influence made itself gradually felt among the Jews. Such men as were irreligiously minded, and eager after novelty, fell away from the Mosaic covenant, led heathen lives, and brought heathen learning and customs into the city of God. Priests even neglected the service of the altar to assist at sinful spectacles. The infamous Jason, the brother of the pious high priest Onias, bought the office of high priest from Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, and sent a rich offering in money to Tyre for Hercules, who was there honoured as a god. Thus sin again found entrance into the holy city, and a new trial in the furnace of affliction was needed for the salvation of the people. To this end Antiochus Epiphanes, the king of Syria before mentioned, was the instrument made use of by God for their punishment. Some disturbances in Jerusalem caused him to suspect the Jews of a disposition

¹ At this time the Hebrew Bible was translated into the Greek language, then universally in use. It was called the Alexandrian Septuagint version, because it was done in the Egyptian city of Alexandria by seventy (Septuaginta) or seventy-two learned Jews.

to shake off his yoke. Furiously enraged against them, he marched from Egypt, where he was then engaged in a campaign, advanced upon Jerusalem, and took the city by storm. Blood flowed in streams; boys and old men, women and children, virgins and sucklings, were put to the sword. Eighty thousand unhappy victims were slain in three days, and forty thousand more led into captivity. The tyrant had even the boldness to force his way into the temple, "the holiest place on all the earth," to profane the sacred vessels, and to plunder the treasury, the provision of the orphan and the widow. Intoxicated with victory, he returned to his capital Antioch, "whilst in his pride he thought to make the earth navigable and the sea a firm way, from the arrogance of his heart." He soon sent one of his hated captains to Judea, with the command, "to kill all the grown men, and to sell all the women and boys." Once more the sword swept down without pity "an enormous multitude." At last, as though to fill up the measure of his crimes, Antiochus resolved to extirpate the Jewish religion. For this end he sent a crafty miscreant to Jerusalem to force the Jews to apostatise from their religion, and to substitute for it idolatry and heathen customs. "A fearful flood of the worst evils broke loose upon the whole people." The keeping of the Sabbath, circumcision, all the sacrifices, ceremonies, and customs prescribed by the Mosaic law, were forbidden. Idol altars were erected in every city; the temple of the living God was dedicated to the service of the Olympian Jupiter, and its sacred courts profaned by the most shameful excesses. All suffered death who refused to obey the will of the tyrant. Many of the Jews yielded, and offered sacrifice to the gods, or ate swine's flesh in token of apostasy. But many others chose rather to die than forsake the law of God, and to escape from contamination, left all they possessed and fled to the wilderness, living in holes and clefts, among the beasts upon the mountains, and feeding upon herbs and roots. Some who fell into the hands of the enemy endured courageously the most fearful tor-

ments. Amongst these one of the most remarkable was Eleazar, a venerable old man of ninety. On being urged to eat swine's flesh he firmly refused; and on its being then suggested to him that he should pretend to eat it, he answered, with holy indignation, "It doth not become our age to dissemble, whereby many young persons, . . . through my dissimulation, and for a little time of a corruptible life, should be deceived. . . . For though, for the present time, I should be delivered from the punishments of men, yet should I not escape the hand of the Almighty, neither alive nor dead." He was led, therefore, to the place of torture, and crowned his long and blameless life with a glorious death. No less glorious was the end of the seven brothers of the Machabees and their pious mother. Face to face with the terrible torments which threatened them, they all chose bravely to die for the laws of their fathers. One of them, when at his last gasp, said to Antiochus, "Thou, indeed, O most wicked man, destroyest us out of this present life; but the King of the world will raise us up, who die for His laws, in the resurrection of eternal life." Another so calmly offered his own limbs for mutilation that Antiochus and his executioner were surprised at the courage of the youth, "because he esteemed the torments as nothing." In like manner all, one after the other, met the martyr's death. "Before all," as Holy Scripture says, "was their mother to be admired, who beheld her seven sons slain in the space of one day," encouraging, as she did, each one by her wisdom and fortitude, and at last bravely treading after them the bloody path of martyrdom (2 Mac. vii.).

But God's chastisement was for the conversion and not for the destruction of the people, and He therefore raised them up a saviour. This was Mathathias, a priest of the house of the Asmoneans, who was then dwelling in the hill-town of Modin, to the north-west of Jerusalem. Overcome with grief for the dishonour of the holy city, and burning with zeal for the law of God, he, together with his five sons and a little band of fugitives, determined to open a war upon

their oppressors. The blessing of God was with this little company, and glorious results crowned their undertaking. "They slew the sinners in their wrath, and the wicked men in their indignation," destroyed the altars of the false gods, and restored the full observance of the law. When the brave course of Mathathias was run, his noble son Judas took his place at the head of the army. He fought joyfully for the cause of Israel, springing with lion-like courage on the arrogant oppressors, whom he defeated in many bloody battles, and filled with the terror of his powerful arm. His bold deeds gained for him the surname "Machabee, the Hammerer;" a title which became extended also to his followers. The fame of the Machabees spread to the ends of the earth, and the name of Judas was everywhere spoken of with admiration. Maddened with rage at the success of the Jews, Antiochus again sent his army into Palestine to destroy them. But the Machabees were endowed not only with wonderful heroism, but also with the most unshaken confidence in God's protection. They prepared themselves for the fight with prayer and fasting, and with "The victory of God" for their battle-cry, rushed furiously on their far more numerous enemies. Many thousands were slain; the rest took to flight, and so their power was crushed and their pride broken. The Jews joyfully entered Jerusalem, purified the sanctuary, built a new altar, offered a holocaust to the Most High, and for eight days celebrated the feast of the consecration of the temple, with songs of praise and the sound of harps. The news of the victories of the Machabees reached Antiochus as he was returning home covered with shame from Persia, where he had been on a plundering expedition in the hope of refilling his exhausted treasury. Burning for revenge, he swore to make Jerusalem the grave of the Jews, and gave command to start in haste for the city. But the hand of Divine justice forestalled him. He was seized with fearful pains in the bowels, and thus, devoured of worms, the "infamous murderer and blasphemer died a miserable death." (Vol. ii. p. 250.)

After the wretched end of this tyrant the Jews gained many brilliant victories over their enemies, under the leadership of the brave Judas, and of his no less heroic brother Jonathan, who succeeded him in command. After this latter had been removed by treachery, he was followed by his brother Simon, the fourth in this brilliant series. Simon, after many troubles, succeeded in gaining independence and freedom for the Jewish people (B.C. 147), and inaugurated an era of peace and prosperity. The people in their gratitude conferred upon him the hereditary dignity of the principedom and high priesthood. He fortified the cities of Juda, and governed his people with wisdom. John Hircanus, his son and successor, subjugated the Idumeans, the hereditary enemies of the Israelites, and like another David, widened the borders of his kingdom on all sides. This age of peace and joy did not, however, last long. The time was approaching when Israel's earthly greatness was to decline before the power of another and a spiritual kingdom. Unfortunate differences, which arose in the family of Hircanus, causing as they did bloody civil wars, brought about the ruin of its power. Two brothers, of the house of Asmoneus, disputed with one another for the highest place, and so afforded to the Romans a long wished-for opportunity of interfering in Jewish affairs, and turning them to their own profit. The Roman general, Pompey, took Jerusalem, razed its walls to the ground, and made the whole country tributary to Rome; and thus Jewish independence for ever disappeared. Rome's iron sceptre pressed on Israel with continually-increasing weight. In the year 37 B.C. the Roman Senate formally declared the cunning and cruel Herod the Idumean to be king of Judea; and Octavius, who afterwards became emperor under the name of Augustus, confirmed his title. Supported by the Romans, Herod took possession of the holy city; and in order to extinguish in the Jews all hope of regaining their independence, he put to death, with unexampled cruelty, the whole house of the Asmoneans.

SECTION XX.

UNIVERSAL EXPECTATION OF A SAVIOUR—MORAL CONDITION OF THE
WORLD—FROM WHENCE WAS HELP TO COME?

“Four thousand years had elapsed since the creation of the world. All the signs that were to precede the coming of the Messiah had been fulfilled; the Jews were looking out for Him with longing, whilst among the Gentiles there was a wide-spread belief that a great Ruler should arise in Judea.”

DARKENED and depraved as the primitive revelation had in the course of four thousand years become amongst many nations, through hardness of heart and perversity of will, yet there ever remained, as we have before said (pp. 60, 61), the memory of a heavy transgression, through which man at some far distant time had forfeited a condition of happiness and innocence, and become plunged into one of the deepest moral and physical wretchedness. And with this memory there remained also the tradition that a Saviour was one day to come from heaven, who with a strong hand would put an end to the iron age and bring back the age of gold.

Never amongst Jews or heathen had this expectation been more awake, never had the call for salvation sounded so loudly, as at the time when the promise made to man in Paradise was really about to be fulfilled. With eager curiosity the sons of Israel beheld the sceptre depart from Juda, and the seventy weeks of years of which Daniel had spoken, draw towards their close. The happy hour, they now thought, could not be far distant, when He, the Expected of the nations, who had been from the beginning so often and so solemnly announced by the prophets, would appear. And, in fact, when John the Baptist came “in the spirit and power of Elias,” all were thinking in their hearts of John that perhaps he might be the Christ (Luke iii. 15), and the Jews of Jerusalem therefore sent priests and Levites to him to ask him who he was—whether he was the Christ or no—on which John “confessed, I am not the Christ” (John i. 20). That such a conjecture should have arisen among the Jews is

the more remarkable, forasmuch as in past centuries there had never once been a disposition among them to take any prophet, however great his powers or holy his life, for the Messiah. With regard to the expectation of a Saviour by the heathen, it is a fact generally admitted even by the enemies of the Christian faith. The freethinker Volney, who died in 1820, and whose knowledge of antiquity is unquestioned, says in his work on "Ruins" (chap. xxii.) :—"The sacred tradition and the mythologies handed down from the earliest times had spread throughout the whole of Asia the notion of a great Mediator and Judge who was to appear in the last days; and as King, God, Conqueror, and Lawgiver, was to restore to the earth the age of gold, free it from the dominion of evil, and bring back to mankind a reign of peace, happiness, and justice." The Pagan writers, Tacitus and Suetonius, who lived in the first century of the Christian era, go so far as to point out Judea as the land in which the great Ruler was to arise; and even Voltaire makes the remarkable admission "that it has been held from time immemorial by the Indians and Chinese, that the Wise Man was to come from the West; whilst Europeans, on the contrary, held that the Wise Man was to come from the East." It is, indeed a fact, that sixty-five years after the birth of Christ, a Chinese emperor sent two of the great men of his kingdom westwards, that they might make inquiries concerning the Holy One and His law.

"The world was now lying sunk in boundless depths of misery. The Jews, indeed, always recognised the true God; but evil sects, such as the Pharisees and Sadducees, had arisen amongst them. Moral corruption was widely spread; and for the most part they honoured God with their lips only, while their actions were regulated by their own sinful passions."

A short sketch of the incredible moral and religious destitution which everywhere prevailed at the time of the coming of our Lord, has been given (vol. ii. p. 129 or 131), and in part illustrated, by what has been said above, concerning the condition of the heathen world. (P. 32, &c.) We cannot in this book furnish a complete picture of the unnatural license which at that time prevailed. A few words will suffice for

our present purpose. The whole Jewish nation it cannot be denied, even at this late period, clung tenaciously, and even with enthusiasm, to the Mosaic law. Jehovah alone, the God of their fathers, was honoured and adored, and they waited ardently and hopefully for the promised Messiah. The temple at Jerusalem they regarded as the invincible citadel of their nation, and they looked with abhorrence on the abominations of the heathen idolatry. But yet how deplorable does the condition of Judea, not only politically, but far more in its religious and moral aspect, appear to us, if, looking beyond this fair exterior, we discern how entirely all inward religious life had departed! Religion seemed, indeed, to flourish in full strength, but it was a religion without true piety; the Messiah was ardently longed for, but no higher spiritual life was desired. Men strove after the fulfilment of the dead letter of the law, but the inner spirit which was pleasing in God's sight, was wanting. The enlightened sect of the Sadducees—a body of freethinkers, consisting mostly of the higher classes—believed, indeed, in Jehovah, expected the coming Messiah, and conformed to the letter of the Mosaic law; but they nevertheless led sensual lives, and denied the Providence of God, the existence of the angels, the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection of the body. The Pharisees, on the contrary, who were very numerous, from their ranks having been largely joined by the priests and scribes, and whose professed aim it was to oppose the over-liberal principles and heretical teaching of the Sadducees, were absorbed, now in petty jealousies among themselves, now in propounding arbitrary interpretations of the law, and held the essence of religion to consist in the observance of trifling and often ridiculous ceremonies.¹ Dissimu-

¹ The "commandments of men," which had crept in gradually in great numbers, chiefly regarded the strict observance of the Sabbath, the payment of tithes, and external purifications. Hence the countless washings of their hands and utensils. If a gnat fell into an earthen pot, it was broken; and because a gnat, which was regarded as an unclean insect, could easily be swallowed with any drink, the zealous Pharisees always strained their drinks. Hence it is that Christ speaks of "straining out a gnat."

lation and hypocrisy however gained them great respect from the people, and gave them much influence over their habits and modes of thought. Such teaching and example could serve only to foster the ignorance of the multitude, to divert them from the paths of piety, and to lead them into the way of destruction. Whilst shamelessly indulging sinful passions, they were always ready to appeal proudly to the outward exactitude, such as had never at any former time been heard of, with which the most minute precepts were observed. They regarded with overweening pride their privileges as children of Abraham. Conscious of their high destiny, believing themselves to be unjustly given over to a foreign tyranny, their hatred towards the iron rule of Rome had risen to a pitch of the utmost intensity. Blinded by sin, and at the same time unconscious of their own sinfulness, they were, for the most part, incapable of receiving the grace of the Messiah; their desires were all earthly, and were centred on gaining their release from the hated Roman yoke. With a people so carnally-minded, how was it possible that the teachings of the promised Saviour should find acceptance? It needed that one should "go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias," and with holy zeal summon the degenerate Israelites to bring forth worthy fruits of penance, lest they, though of the stock of Abraham, should, like barren trees, be cut down, and cast into the fire (Luke iii.).

"All other nations, the most civilised even amongst them, the Greeks and the Romans, followed the most degrading idolatry. Altars were built, and sacrifices, often of human victims, were offered to a countless number of gods and goddesses; and these were thought to be especially honoured by the celebration, and unblushing imitation of, their crimes and vices. Thus were the heathen, as St. Paul bears witness (Rom. i. 29-31), 'filled with all iniquity, malice, fornication, avarice, wickedness; full of envy, murder, contention, deceit, malignity, whisperers, . . . foolish, dissolute, without affection, without fidelity, without mercy.'"

Confused and darkened as was the knowledge of God among the heathen nations, yet amongst all their errors a glimmering of Divine truth is yet to be seen—a perception of the existence of One Supreme Being, who is the Almighty

Ruler over the whole world. The earliest Christian writers and Fathers of the Church recognise this to be the case. In proof of it they appeal, not only to the testimony of poets and philosophers, but to their own experience in their daily intercourse with the heathen around them. Tertullian, St. Cyprian, Arnobius, Minutius Felix, and Lactantius, who all lived amongst heathen, tell us that, when moved by sudden fear or joy, it was not on Saturn, Jupiter, or Mars that they would call, but simply on God, the Lord of the Universe; and that they would then exclaim, as though involuntarily, "Great God! Good God! God help me! God save me!" or again, "By God! God grant! God sees it! God wills it!" Even the guilty city of Ninive bears witness to this truth; for had the idea of the true God been quite strange to the minds of its inhabitants, they would not have believed immediately on Jonas' preaching, and have cried to the Lord of heaven and earth for mercy, rather than to the divinities of their nation. It was this, indeed, which, according to the Fathers, was the greatest crime of the heathen, that they would not acknowledge Him, whom it was impossible for them to ignore.¹ "Although they discerned God," says St. Paul, "they did not honour Him, but corrupted the truth of God with falsehood, and prayed to creatures instead of the Creator." In the whole earth the one true God possessed but one sanctuary, and that was in Jerusalem; while the temples of the heathen gods and goddesses were innumerable. These alone received from high and low the tribute of divine worship; in their honour victims were slain, gifts offered, and incense burnt, and woe to him who should venture to protest against the terrible delusion. It was on the charge of not honouring the gods of his nation, that Socrates was made to suffer death by poison.

We need not wonder at the magical power by which the heathen worship enchained almost the whole world. It possessed an irresistible charm for the sensual nature of man in

¹ Tertullian, *Apolog.*, xvii. ; Cyprian *de Vanit. Idol.*, ix.

his fallen state. It stamped the most disgraceful vices with the seal of religion, and set free the libertine to follow without shame wherever his passions might lead him; for in so doing he did but imitate the gods.¹

How pleasing and encouraging must the thought have been, "Thus did Jupiter, the king of gods, who shakes the vault of heaven with his thunderbolts, and shall I, a miserable mortal, shun to do likewise?"² Nay, not only was vice rendered glorious by the example of the gods, it was often absolutely prescribed, and formed a part of the customary worship. Indeed, as we have elsewhere remarked, cruelty and immorality of the most abominable nature, formed the very essence of the heathen religious rites. To win the favour of the gods, human victims were mercilessly slain on their altars, their temples were made the scenes of unbridled lust and cruelty,³ plays were enacted in which honourable morals were held up to ridicule, whilst in the combats of the gladiators all rights of humanity were trodden under foot.⁴ In honour of the gods, priests and priestesses, senators and statesmen, people of every condition, flocked, now to the theatre, where they might please themselves by witnessing life-like representations of the shameful loves of their divinities, now to the amphitheatre, where they might enjoy to satiety the spectacle of flowing blood, gaping wounds, and dying men. (Vol. i. p. 167.) Thus, for the dwellers in a great city, the year went by in one devilish round of lust and cruelty, and all was for the greater honour of the gods; a man might boast, indeed, that his whole life, with all its pleasures, was but one act of worship!⁵

¹ St. Cyprian (Ep. i.), "Deos suos, quos venerantur, imitantur; fiunt miseri et religiosa delicta." Lactant. (Instit., lib. i. cap. 20), "Quid mirum, si ab hac gente universa delicta manarunt, apud quam ipsa delicta religiosa sunt?"

² Terent. Eun., act iii. sc. 2. "Why," asks St. Justin of the heathen, "why art thou wrath with thy son for planning treachery against thee, whilst thou honourest Jupiter, who did the like? Thou who bowest down in the temple of Venus, what right hast thou to complain of thy spouse that she leads a dissolute life?"

³ Minutius Felix, Octav. xxv.

⁴ Arnob. adv. Gen., lib. vii. cap. 33, 36.

⁵ Döllinger, "Heidenthum und Judenthum," p. 642.

Such, then, was the religion of the heathen; that which should have been the most powerful protective against crime had become, instead, the fruitful mother of all vices. From this alone we may judge how deep was the prevailing corruption. This corruption is thus described in the words of a Pagan writer: "Vice no longer creeps in secretly; it openly courts the eye. Wickedness has broken all bonds; and has so rooted itself in every breast, that innocence is no longer *rare* only, but it is no more to be found" (Seneca, *üb. d. Zorn Bch.* ii. chap. 8).

"Who could now help men—who could save them? God alone! And help and save He did. As He had promised to our first parents in Paradise, and had since foretold by the prophets, He took pity on the fallen race of man, and sent him a Redeemer and Saviour. 'For God so loved the world, as to give His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting' (John iii. 16)."

It was from God alone that help could proceed. Unless sinful humanity was to be left to fall hopelessly into the abyss of eternal ruin, a divinely-sent Saviour and Redeemer must interpose in its behalf. Regarded by the light of faith, this would be necessarily true, even though the spreading corruption of man's moral and religious nature should not have resulted in disorders so frightful. (Vol. ii. p. 75.) But now when the human race, left as it had been to itself for four thousand years, had erred so deplorably and fallen into such shameful thralldom to its own passions; now that the whole world was under the dominion of superstition and license—a condition so miserable must have made it evident even to the heathen themselves, that no real help could come from man, but was to be looked for from above only; that is to say, from God Himself. Socrates had already declared that "unless some one came to put aside the thick mist, man could not know how he was to comport himself towards God and man." (See above, upon the necessity of divine revelation, vol. i. p. 40.) And all who were capable of perceiving in its full extent the hopeless depth of the surrounding corruption, were filled with grief and despair. They saw how vain it

was to battle with the ever-increasing evil. They saw how powerless were human laws or human teaching, to stem the tide of corruption; they looked in vain for some germ of a new life, or for any sign of a moral regeneration; and many, in their despair, fell into the false and melancholy belief that "human life was but a great farce." (See Döllinger's *Heathenism and Judaism*, p. 732.) Before proceeding to the history of that Redeemer whom God in His infinite mercy sent into the world, we must first cast one more glance over the period we have already traversed.

REVIEW OF THE PERIOD FROM MOSES TO CHRIST.

In this period, as well as in the preceding one, God revealed Himself as the universal Lord and Ruler of the world, who in His infinite mercy granted to the sinful nations time for penance, but visited them with just punishments when they persevered in their wickedness, and so ruled and guided both individuals and nations as always, in spite of their resistance, to secure the perfect accomplishment of His divine counsels. Above all things, we must bear in mind that the Scripture history from Moses to Christ sets forth symbolically the mysteries relating to the Redeemer and His Church, in the same manner as does that from Adam to Moses. In the persons of God's eminent servants, in the miraculous events recorded, Christ the Lord is presented to us in His attributes and His deeds. In Moses, we behold Him as the great liberator from the servitude of sin, as the Founder of the new covenant, as Mediator and Lawgiver, as a worker of miracles, a bestower of blessings; as one who feeds His people wonderfully with the bread of heaven on their journey through the wilderness of life, and refreshes them with the never-failing springs of Divine grace. We see Him in Josue as the victorious Leader, who conducts us after battle into the land of everlasting rest. In Gedeon, Samson, and David, as the conquering Hero, before whom all the enemies of our salvation are laid low; and in Solomon, as the Prince of Peace, the wise and glorious King, who wields the sceptre of His dominion over all the nations of the earth.

And now the time was accomplished, and the nations were anxiously expecting the Coming One—the great Monarch and Ruler

of the world. But quite otherwise than as they had dreamt of Him was the Messiah to appear. Shame and poverty and scorn were to be His portion, and He was to complete on the cross the offering of His life. Thus it is that He was to release us from guilt, and heal the wounds which our sins had made. But would the world, earthly-minded as it was, here see and reverence a mystery and a decree of the Divine Wisdom? Would it not rather take scandal at the poverty, the lowliness, and the cross of the Saviour? But against this, God had long before made provision. Again and again during the course of centuries He had caused to be foreshadowed, not the power and magnificence only, but the sufferings and bloody death of the Saviour.

In the Paschal lamb we see Him slain, that the destroying angel might be turned aside. In Moses we see Him as a child sought out and condemned to die; in David, and in all the prophets, we behold Him hated, scorned, and persecuted. We see Him raised aloft in the wilderness, that He may shed forth health and life upon mankind, labouring under the poison of sin. In all bloody sacrifices, whether in the tabernacle or in the temple, the bloody death of the Saviour is foreshadowed. In Gedeon He is victorious by weakness, in Samson by death, in David by the shameful wood of the cross. His resurrection from the dead, after three days spent in the grave, is symbolised in the history of Jonas. In the person of Eliseus He raises men to life, first making Himself like unto them, and undergoing a shameful death Himself in the form of a servant. In thus going through the Old Testament, we encounter a long series of the most striking types, in which we may perceive now the exaltation, and now the deep humiliation, of the Messiah. As the types begin to disappear the prophecies become the more numerous, foretelling in words what the types did but prefigure in mystery. In them the coming Redeemer is described, not only as the Desired of nations, the victorious Leader, to whom the kings of the earth from far and near should bow down, but as "the Man of sorrows, without beauty or comeliness," as the last of men, as a lamb led to the slaughter and put to death for our sins. Through shame He goes to glory, and through death to life.

As we close the history of the Old Testament, let us recognise with gratitude yet another instance of God's Providence, which, in confirmation of all the foregoing types and prophecies, has provided a witness which the most obstinate unbelief cannot ignore. This witness is the Jewish people itself, the sworn enemy of Christianity, which reads the sentence of its own rejection in the ancient and sacred documents to which we appeal, and would thus have especial cause for repudiating them. But these documents the Jews, on the con-

trary, love and treasure with the most reverent care, regarding them as the most precious thing left to them of the religion of their fathers. Whithersoever they may be driven, these writings, as a sacred possession, are borne with them, and the knowledge of them thus spread among strange nations. It was not God's will, as the holy Fathers say, that this nation should be destroyed, although more than all others it had deserved destruction, in order that we might thus in its existence have yet another living witness to the truth of our holy religion.

REMARKS ON PRE-CHRISTIAN HISTORY.

The inspira-
tion of Moses
evidenced
from the
history of
the crea-
tion.

1. The great problem concerning the origin of the world and of man, had been ever under discussion, and had been answered in many different ways. Each nation had its own ideas regarding it, which have come down to us in the form of Sagas or religious traditions. These all are more or less agreed, that in the beginning there existed chaos only ; a confusion, that is, of the primary elements of things. How this chaos arose, and how it became transformed into the fair shapes around us ; how it was that stars, earth, and sea, plants, animals, and men evolved themselves, was a problem to which no sufficient answer could be found, none at least but such as were not only insufficient, but contradictory to sound reason. We find that amongst many nations the following tradition has been handed down from the most remote antiquity :—That from amongst the chaotic elements namely, a shining egg became formed, and that from this egg came forth the heavens and earth. The Phœnicians held that this egg had been given birth to by the wind, and that when its shell burst, the upper and the under worlds, the sun, moon, and stars, the earth and sea, and the whole company of the gods, came forth from it. The Indian religious traditions, as preserved in the most ancient of their sacred books, the books of *Manu* and *Purana*, run differently. The book of the *Law of Manu* teaches, that for a whole creative year, *Brahma* sat within the golden egg, which had formed itself out of the sperm of the primeval waters, and that at the end of this time he divided it, and formed heaven and earth out of the two halves. The “*Vishnu Purana*” (bk. i. chap. 5) says “that furthermore, by his life-giving power, the divine *Brahma* formed the birds ; from his breast went forth the sheep, from his muscles the goats proceeded, from his belly and thighs the oxen, and from his feet the horses, mules, elephants, camels, and other beasts ; while from the hairs of his body sprang

the roots, herbs, and fruits. By the Greek mythology the origin of the human race is not attributed to the gods, but to Prometheus, one of the Titans, who is said by it to have formed man of clay and water, and to have stolen fire from heaven in order to animate the lifeless shape. The story goes on to relate that in punishment for this crime he was chained by Jupiter on a mountain in the Caucasus, there to be devoured continually by a vulture. According to the Chaldean priest Berosus, who under Alexander the Great wrote the history of his country from the ancient records preserved in the temple of Bel, the first man was made of earth, and of the blood of the god Bel. When Bel had dispersed the original chaos, and separated light from darkness, he, as Berosus relates, cut off his own head, and mixed his blood with clay, and from this mixture the gods formed men. What now can be the cause that, whilst all the other ancient accounts of the creation are incoherent and contradictory, that of Moses alone fulfils the requirements of reason, and is conformable with the discoveries of physical science? Is there not a striking proof here apparent, that Moses had access to some source of Divine revelation, whether such a revelation was made directly to himself, or whether he received it through the traditions handed down from our first parents in Paradise? Had he himself composed his history, he would, without doubt, in order to make it appear credible, have adapted it to the beliefs and ideas then generally current among men. He would not, for instance, have said that light and plants came into being before the sun, or have classed together the production of birds and fishes; nor probably, would he have placed last of all the creation of man. The opinion was very general in his time, that without the sun, light could not be, nor any plants subsist.

It would have been more natural also to have connected birds with land animals than with fishes, seeing that they live in air, not in water, and frequent for the most part the dry land. It might, too, have been easily supposed that the masterpiece of creation, man, was first created, and after him the plants and animals as he needed them. But the latest researches of science bear witness that Moses, in deviating from the general opinion, did but speak truth; and a truth, too, which he could not in any natural manner have known or guessed at. Modern science has now revealed to us that light is not necessarily produced from the sun's body, but is independent of it, and may therefore have existed before the sun and moon took form and brightness. And indeed the latest opinion, and that which is most widely accepted by men of science concerning the formation of the heavenly bodies, is that light must have been in existence before these several bodies became detached from the

general mass of original matter, and solidified into a permanent form. That Moses should have placed the creation of the sun, as well as of the other heavenly bodies, upon the fourth day, between, that is, the production of the vegetable and animal worlds, manifests a wonderful insight on his part into the past inter-dependence of the different parts of creation. It appears now probable in a high degree that the lower forms of plants (*Alge* and *Fuce*) may have long vegetated in the primeval deep before the heavy vaporous atmosphere became clear enough to allow the sun's rays to reach them. An examination of the stratified surface of the earth also bears evidence that it was in a like order with that recorded by the Mosaic history, that plants and animals came into being. Thus in the most ancient of the stratified slates we find imbedded the fossil remains of plants, then follow strata containing, besides plants, marine animals, such as corals, shells, and fishes, together with some traces of birds. It is only in those strata belonging to the last or tertiary period of the earth's history, that we find the relics of land animals, while, as far as we at present know, human remains are to be met with, neither in the more ancient nor in the newer deposits.

Single origin
of the
human race

That God, as stated in the Mosaic history, formed but one human pair, and that from this pair all the different races of men, black as well as white, inhabitants of the New as well as of the Old Worlds, are all descended, finds evidence in the most recent discoveries, both in philology and natural science. It is now freely admitted that neither difference of colour in the several races of men, nor the wide separation of the Western from the Eastern Continents, would furnish grounds for calling in question the truth of the Mosaic narrative. "It is not yet four hundred years since the Portuguese settled in India. Their descendants, who took Indian wives, are to-day as black as negroes. The same may be observed of the Caucasian races of Northern and Western Asia, who have for several generations inhabited India. Even without intermarriages with the women of the country, their children have come to resemble the native Indians in darkness of complexion."¹ With

¹ See Gfrörer, "*Urgeschichte des menschlichen Geschlechtes*," vol. i. p. 149. See also Oscar Fraas, "*Vor der Sündfluth! Eine Geschichte der Urwelt*," 1866, p. 452, &c. Reusch, "*Bibel und Natur*," 1862, p. 386, &c. To adduce arguments against the theory that men are descended from apes, would be paying too much honour to a huge paradox. Such imaginings, derogatory to the dignity of the human race, and destructive as they are to the foundations of Christian morality, are, in our judgment, disgraceful to science, and to diffuse or adopt them would appear to us a crime.

regard to America, it is well known that its distance from the north-eastern extremity of Asia is so small, that in winter, when the straits are covered with ice, there would be no difficulty in passing on foot from one continent to the other. There are besides good grounds for supposing that Asia and America were at one time united, and that their present division is owing to disturbances in the earth's surface. It is also far from improbable that ships from very distant lands may have been driven by violent storms upon the American coasts. This actually happened not a century since to some Japanese vessels, which when found were without masts or rudders. And in the year 1500, too, Cabral, a Portuguese, set sail with thirteen ships for the East Indies, but was driven by violent winds on the Brazilian coast.

The history of the discovery of America affords a good instance of the fallacy of the sort of objections which are made from physics and ethnology, to the credibility of the narratives contained in the Scriptures. When, in the last ten years of the fifteenth century, Christopher Columbus landed on the then freshly-discovered shores of America, he was said to have been the first who had succeeded in passing from the Old World to the New; and so men agreed that the strange nations whom he found there could not be descended from Adam and Eve. But this inference would at the present day be regarded as entirely unnecessary. Since the publication of the report of the Norwegian Royal Society for Northern Antiquities¹ (?), containing the results of their researches in this department, we can have no manner of doubt that, during the tenth and eleventh centuries, the old Norsemen were in the constant habit of visiting the eastern coasts of North America. It is unquestionable that the Episcopal See of Gardar, in Greenland, was in existence in the twelfth century. In the neighbourhood of its probable headquarters there are yet to be seen the ruins of a great church.

2. It would be easy to point out how, after the example of the Apostles, all the most learned of the Fathers of the Church, from St. Clement, St. Justin, St. Irenæus, down to St. Thomas Aquinas, took on themselves the task of setting forth the value of the types contained in the Old Testament, and of presenting them for the contemplation of the faithful, in the moving and eloquent writings and discourses which they have left us. It is not merely casually that they are touched upon; many of the Fathers wrote whole books, in which the types and their antitypes were arranged in order, and their correspondence one with the other traced, even to the most minute details. Thus did St. Augustine (*De Civitate Dei*, bks. xv., xvi., xvii.; *Contra Faustum*, lib. xii.), St. Cyril, of Alexan-

Importance
of the Old
Testament
types.

¹ Königliche Norwegische Gesellschaft der Nördlichen Antiquitäten.

dria (Glaphyror. in Genes.), Isidore of Seville (Quæst. in Genes.), Beda (Commentar. in Pentateuch, &c.). The Epistle of Barnabas again, which, if not the work of the apostle of that name, was at least written by one of the earliest Fathers, contains little else but a collection and explanation of the Old Testament types. The Jewish commentators, both before and after Christ, recognised in the sacred records a higher and symbolical meaning.¹ The celebrated Philo, who lived in Alexandria during the time of Christ and the Apostles, had compared this symbolical meaning to the soul, and the literal meaning to the body of the writings. Such of his works as we possess consist, for the most part, entirely of explanations of the symbolical meanings which he discerned, in the events, things, and persons, of the Mosaic record. As has lately been remarked with justice, it may well surprise us that the typical meanings contained in the Old Testament meet in our own day with so little attention, and that such scanty use has for so long been made by Christian apologists of the inexhaustible treasure with which they furnish us. Why, if not for their value as demonstrations, should the Apostles and the Fathers have taken pains to refer to them so continually?² The Fathers all universally held that attention to, and understanding of, its symbolical sense, was indispensable to the right comprehension of the Sacred Scriptures. And in their controversial writings against Jews, Pagans, and heretics, they constantly availed themselves of this hidden meaning, as of a powerful weapon. When the heathen and the Manichæans, like the rationalists of the present day, affected to have discovered fabulous or unprofitable matter in the Holy Scriptures, and ventured to compare them to the traditions of mythology, the Fathers were accustomed to reply, as Origen did to Celsus, and St. Augustine to Faustus, that in their objections they had regard to the dead letter merely, not grasping the spirit, and looked only on the surface, without being able to penetrate to the symbolical meaning which was hidden beneath it. When the Jews failed to see how it could be that the Messiah should be persecuted by His own, and suffer death upon the cross, and how they, the first-born, the sons of Abraham according to the flesh, could be deprived of the promised blessing, then, as did Justin to Tryphon (*Dialog. cum Tryphone Judæo*), the Fathers pointed out to them that these things had not only been foretold by the prophets, but foreshadowed repeatedly in the history of the patriarchs. And herein the Divine Wisdom especially shows itself, for, as St. Chrysostom remarks (*Homil. on*

¹ See the proof in Patrizi, "*Interpretatio Sacrarum Scripturarum*," lib. i. cap. x. a. 3.

² For example, Matt. ii. 15; John xix. 36; 1 Cor. x. 1-6; Gal. iv. 22-24; Heb. vii. 13.

Abraham), when God has determined to do something which might appear to mankind incredible, He sets it forth beforehand by means of types and shadows, in order that men may be prepared for the reception of the truth, and not on its sudden manifestation turn from it in unbelief. Thus it ought not to have seemed impossible to the Jews that the world's salvation should proceed from the Saviour raised aloft upon the wood of the cross, or that they themselves, the heirs according to the flesh of the promised blessing, should be set aside; for did they not know that it was from looking towards the serpent raised upon a pole that their fathers had been healed in the wilderness of the poisonous bites, and had they not before their eyes repeated examples of rejections of the first-born—of Ismael, Esau, Manasses, and Ruben—in favour of their younger brethren?

For us who are Christians, the depth of meaning contained within these types is inexhaustible. They show us, beyond all doubt, how in truth the religion of Christ is like a tree whose mighty roots are planted in the sacred soil of Paradise, and that it is but one faith that the Old and New Testaments set forth. According to a striking image, the two Testaments, the Old and the New, may be compared to two harmonious choirs, each singing the mystery, the power, and the glory of Jesus Christ. The Old Testament with its types and prophecies bearing witness to the truth of the mysteries of the New, and the mysteries of the New Testament vouching in their turn for the Divine inspiration of the prophecies and types of the Old.

Not less beautiful is the thought of St. Augustine when, ravished with the wonderful harmony between the old and the new covenants, he exclaims, "Is not the way in which the two Testaments proclaim unanimously the sacred truth, like the voices of two seraphim who together cry before the throne of the Most High, 'Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth'?"

3. That by the expression "years," which it uses in speaking of the ages of the patriarchs, Scripture intends we should understand years like our own, consisting each of twelve months of thirty days, the account given of the time passed by Noe and his family in the ark goes to show. The Mosaic computation of time having been thought by some to be exaggerated, the notion has been put forward that when speaking of years, he meant months; from this it would follow, however, that the lives of the patriarchs were shorter than our own, that Henoch begat a son in his fifth year, and that Abraham lived for only fourteen years, although the Scripture says of him that he died at a great age, and full of days. Nothing further, therefore, need be said in refutation of an idea which is self-evidently absurd.

Longevity
of the patri-
archs.

Nothing is more misleading than the practice of making the experience of to-day our only criterion in judging of what may have happened at an earlier period. Who that did this would believe that races of plants, which we now see only in the forms of grass and stunted moss, long ago were produced as huge trees, a hundred feet in height? But yet we have their fossil remains to prove that so it was. It is most necessary, too, to remember that since the flood the earth has undergone many changes, some of which may have been very unfavourable to human health; a consideration which carries the more weight, knowing as we do that even at the present day, especially in those northern countries such as Russia, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Scotland, where the climate is healthy and the manner of living simple, a hundred and twelve years or more is not at all an unusual age for men to reach, and instances have occurred of their living to be a hundred and seventy or a hundred and eighty years old. The Russian Church Records, for 1801-1804, instance 2890 persons as having attained from a hundred to a hundred and fifty years. A Wallachian, too, in the year 1724, died at the age of a hundred and eighty-five; whilst among the Arabs of the desert men are to be found nearly two hundred years old. Why, therefore, in the face of facts like these, should we refuse to believe Moses when he tells us that in the times before the flood men attained the age of several centuries? Neither is Moses the only authority for statements of this nature. The Jewish historian, Flavius Josephus, with regard to this very question appeals to the testimony of all the heathen antiquarian writers, both Greeks and others as well. "For Manetho," says he, "who has written upon Egypt, and Berosus, who relates the Chaldean history, together with Mochus, Hestieæ, and Jerome the Egyptian, who all treat of Phœnicia, unanimously agree with me. Hesiod even, and Hekatiüs, Helanicus, and Acusilaus, Ephorus, and Nicolaus, say that in the old times men lived a thousand years.

That scientific discovery affords evidence in favour of a deluge.

4. That the earth was once overwhelmed by a great flood is shown, independently of the Mosaic narrative, by the numerous traces which such a flood has left behind upon its surface. Amongst others, by the countless relics of land animals, such as hyenas, elephants, and rhinoceroses, which live in hot climates only, and which are found now in very cold countries, sometimes frozen into ice, sometimes in caves, imbedded in mud and stalagmite; often, too, according to Buckland and others, in company with human bones. Thus, for instance, in the year 1770 a rhinoceros, with the skin and hair still on, was met with in the frozen mud on the coast of Viluji, in Siberia; and in 1804, too, on the peninsula of Tamset; also in Siberia, an elephant, with the flesh quite undecayed, was

discovered in the frozen mud at the mouth of the Lena. Evidently such creatures must have either been carried into these ice-cold regions out of warmer lands by some sudden and overwhelming rush of water, or else, if natives of the north, must have been buried in the ice during some sudden climatic change, which may have resulted from the deluge. The learned Pallas, transported with astonishment at the results of his own researches, thus writes :¹ "These great bones, which lie scattered up and down over the earth, now singly, now as entire skeletons, and now by hundreds together, have convinced me, as nothing else has done, that our earth has really been overwhelmed by a flood. That it should have been so was incredible to me, until I travelled through these lands, and beheld with my own eyes these witnesses for the truth of such an event having taken place." The celebrated naturalist, Cuvier, too, is of a like opinion. "If geology proves anything," he says, "it proves that our earth was once the scene of a great and sudden revolution, of which the date cannot be further distant than five or six thousand years."²

5. God's warning to mankind through the frustration of their presumptuous undertaking was not given entirely in vain. Plato is only giving utterance to a feeling which was universal among the ancients, when he says in his renowned treatise on Laws (book iv. p. 125, stereotyped edition), "It is a well-founded opinion that states, which have not a god, but a mortal only for their founder, cannot possibly escape troubles and disasters." Uncertain as was

Frustration
of the build-
ing of the
Tower of
Babel.

¹ Voyage dans la Haute Asie.

² The recent researches of geologists afford indeed no proof that the immense inundation, which has left everywhere such evident marks, was the same as the flood recorded in Scripture; but they are, on the other hand, powerless to bring forward any facts which would contradict the Mosaic narrative. How deeply the memory of this terrible catastrophe has impressed itself upon the human mind we have already shown at p. 50. "There are certain traditions," says Humboldt, speaking of legends of the deluge, similar to those which have been discovered to exist throughout Asia and Northern Africa, and which he himself found in the equatorial regions, "which we find scattered, like the remains of a wrecked ship, over the whole earth, and which are of profound interest to every student of the history of mankind. The same facts, but slightly altered by local colouring, have been handed down to us in all languages. On great continents, as on the smallest islands, it is always the nearest mountain upon which the survivors of the human race are said to have taken refuge. And in proportion to the want of cultivation in a people, so does their memory represent this great flood as being more recent. It cannot be reasonably supposed that traditions such as these are merely the creations of a sportive fancy. Whence should this remarkable unanimity among them arise if there be not some fact to serve as their common foundation?"—Ost. Fraas, p. 5, Introduction. Compare Reusch, p. 296, seq.

the knowledge of the true God among the ancients, their conviction was profound that the successful issue of all important undertakings depended on the favour and help of some Divine Being. Thence arose the anxious care with which they consulted the oracles before all such enterprises, thence the numerous victims and solemn vows by which they besought the gods to grant them success. Thence came the custom also which obtained among the Roman leaders, that before besieging a fortress they would first adjure its tutelary divinities to forsake the city and temple, and to bestow their favour and protection upon the Romans; and without this ceremony they were persuaded that the town could not be taken. The form of the adjuration is given by Macrobius, *Saturnaliæ*, iii. 9.

Its history
confirmed
by science.

6. The Mosaic history of the tower of Babel, the confusion of tongues, and the dispersion of the human race, also find evidence in the latest antiquarian discoveries. With regard to the tower of Babel itself, it is highly probable that its remains are yet existing. On the right-hand bank of the Euphrates, formerly the site of the ancient Babel or Babylon, and now occupied by the Arab village of Hillah, a pyramidal mound of bricks and rubbish rises amidst huge heaps of ruins to the height of nearly three hundred feet. The lowest part of this mound consists of a long and wide platform about sixty feet high, on this is erected a conical edifice two hundred feet high, and on this again is a sort of tower which is thirty-five feet in height. Those who have seen and examined this structure, agree in considering the uppermost tower as dating from the reign of Nabuchodonosor, about B.C. 600; but the platform, and the building which surmounts it, refer to a much earlier period, when the science of architecture was far less advanced; and there are good grounds for supposing that this lower portion may actually be the remains of that tower of Babel or Babylon, which is spoken of in Scripture. The first of such reasons is the circumstance, that the material of this part of the building is of burnt bricks cemented mostly with asphalt or bitumen, this coinciding very evidently with the Scripture narration of the beginning of the work, when "each one said to his neighbour, Come, let us make bricks, and bake them with fire. And they had brick instead of stones, and slime instead of mortar" (Gen. xi. 4).¹ A second and

¹ The bricks which compose the widely-extended base of the building are, however, dried in the sun only, and it is only in the lower part of the surmounting walls that asphalt is used for mortar. In the upper part it is replaced by red clay. This, however, matters little; Holy Scripture nowhere says that the whole of the building was composed of burnt bricks and asphalt. There is nothing to discountenance the hypothesis that the lower portion, or base, may have already been constructed (perhaps as a protection against the overflowing of the Euphrates) when the descendants of Noe, having learned the art of burn-

most striking witness is to be found in an inscription by Nabuchodonosor, which was discovered built into the wall of the tower. It was the custom under the Babylonian empire, when monumental buildings were erected, to build into their walls lasting records impressed upon cylinders of earthenware, explaining the origin of such buildings. An inscription of this sort, found quite lately, and deciphered by the most learned authority, runs thus: "Nabuchodonosor, king of Babylon, servant of the Being who is self-existing, vicegerent of the gods, is the restorer of this pyramid and tower." The building itself he names, the "House of the seven lights of the earth" (our seven chief planets), "the lasting memorial of Borsippa," *i.e.*, confusion of tongues. Concerning its history, he says, "A former king, forty-two generations since, erected it, but did not finish it. Men left off building it in the days of the flood, because they uttered words without form. I have not changed its place, nor touched its corner-stone."¹ That earlier king, who according to the inscription began the building, is held, not without ground, to have been Nimrod, the grandson of Cham, who, according to Holy Scripture, began, after the deluge, to be a mighty man upon the earth; who founded the kingdom of Babylon, and who presumptuously took a chief share in the erection of the tower of Babel. In agreement with this tradition, the name "Birs Nimrud" (Nimrod's palace) is still given by the natives to the above-mentioned remains of the tower. The period also of forty-two generations, given by Nabuchodonosor, brings us back, if we allow, as usual, thirty-five years to a generation, to the date (about 270 years after the deluge), at which, according to Scripture, the tower of Babel was built, and the kingdom of Babylon founded, by Nimrod.

Evidence is to be found, for the Mosaic account of the confusion of tongues, not only in the ancient name of the city of Babel (or according to the Greek, "Babylon," which signifies "confusion"), and in the inscription left by Nabuchodonosor upon the earthen cylinder, but still more in the extraordinary diversity which actually exists between certain of the languages spoken upon the earth. If, as we have seen, the whole human race is descended from a single pair, there must necessarily have been at first but one original language. The question therefore arises, whence should come the astonishing differences which there are between languages, each of which dates from the most remote antiquity? A reply to this

ing bricks, resolved to build a gigantic tower on this already existing platform. In so doing, it is likely that they may have first made use of asphalt as mortar, but afterwards exchanged it for the red clay which abounds in the neighbourhood; whilst the asphalt would have had to be brought from a greater distance, and may have been found only in insufficient quantities.

¹ See Kaulen, *Sprachverwirrung zu Babel*, chap. xiv.

question is furnished in the sudden and miraculous confusion of tongues which the Sacred Scriptures record. If this account is rejected, it remains inexplicable how the primitive speech could, especially in so short a time, have given birth to languages not in any way connected one with the other, as are dialects of the same language, but which must be considered each in the light of a primitive speech, differing radically and entirely both from each other and from the original tongue. Philologists agree that there are at least three of these primitive languages (the radical, the agglutinative, and the inflectional), each including in itself many languages and families of languages. These cannot be traced by any natural course of development from a common source, but may be well taken rather to be the result of a miraculous interference of God with the speech of mankind.

This division among languages which has endured to our own times, witnesses so powerfully in behalf of the Mosaic narrative, that Herder even (*Vom Geist. der Hebr. Poesie*, vol. i. p. 315) found himself compelled to say, "I accept the miraculous explanation (of Moses), because I know of none that is natural."

Equally favourable evidence is borne by the results of scientific discovery, to the truth of the account given in Scripture of the dispersion of mankind, leading as they unmistakably do to the conclusion that Middle Asia, whence that dispersion is stated by Moses to have taken place, is really the cradle of the human race, and that to it, as to a common starting-point, may be traced the ancestors of the various races with which the whole earth is now peopled. The history, language, manners, religious customs, and traditions of the most widely-separated nations, unite in confirming the discoveries of ethnographical science; and the witness they bear in so doing is one which the bewildering sophisms of unbelief are powerless to discredit. (See Stolberg, *Gesch. der Religion*, vol. i., Supplement iii.; Gfrörer, *Urgeschichte des menschl. Geschlechtes*.)

Situation
and pecu-
liarities of
the country
of Palestine.

7. Chanaan, otherwise called Palestine, the Holy Land, or the Land of Promise, is divided on its northern side by the mountain range of Lebanon from Phœnicia and Syria. On the east it is bounded by the Syrian Desert, on the south by the stony desert of Arabia, and on the west by the Mediterranean Sea. It was in the Holy Land that the true faith was to be preserved in its purity until the coming of the Messias; and from it, as from a centre, the joyful tidings of the Gospel were to go forth to all parts of the earth. Its position would seem as though specially designed to favour these ends.¹ Although cut off from the heathen world, and

¹ See Mislin, "Die heiligen Orte," vol. ii. cap. 21; — Gratz, "Bibl. Erd- und Länderk." 4. Abschnitt. 1. Abtheilung.

to a certain extent isolated, the Mediterranean Sea, the isthmus of Suez, and many other highways of commerce, served on the other hand to open an easy communication with Europe, Africa, and Central Asia. It was remarkable, not for its extent, but for its wonderful fertility and for the abundance of its natural productions. St. Jerome says that none who had travelled throughout Judæa could doubt that it was the most fruitful of all lands, and it is described in Holy Scripture as a land flowing with milk and honey. It was thus capable of supporting a population which in proportion to its extent was enormously great. In David's time the Jewish tribes, exclusive of Levi and Benjamin, reckoned a million and a half of fighting men (1 Paral. xxi. 5, 6), and in the time of its greatest glory, Palestine contained about seven millions of inhabitants. This country, once so fertile and glorious, has now, however, sunk beneath the yoke of Turkey, and is reduced to an absolute desert. The present number of its inhabitants is said to be about 300,000.

8. A question here arises, as to what we are to think concerning the conduct of Rebecca and Jacob. St. Gregory of Nazianzen (*Orat. Apol.*, ii. n. 103) says indeed, without going further into the matter, that Jacob "did not do well;" but the current opinion of our own times, that he was guilty of a grievous sin, and one for which he was forced to do heavy penance, we meet with neither in the writings of this or any other Father of the Church. Many of the Fathers, indeed, do not hesitate to excuse or even to justify his conduct in consideration of the circumstances in which he was placed.¹ It can most certainly be said in his favour, that Holy Scripture always represents him as being a peaceful and contented man, and does not anywhere blame the means by which he obtained the blessing attached to the birthright, but, on the contrary, shows that this blessing granted by Isaac was many times confirmed by God. We may without doubt also suppose, that he, as his mother's favourite, had heard from her of the divine decree, by which the right of the first-born, with its accompanying blessing, had been reserved for him. His desires, therefore, were neither sinful nor unjust, when he demanded of his brother the birthright, and of his father the blessing, of the first-born. If he was to blame, it was for the means he made use of in order to obtain what was in reality his own—in the constraint, namely, which he put upon his brother, and in the lie by which he deceived his father. When, however,

Whether or
no Jacob's
sin was a
grievous
one.

¹ See St. Chrysostom (*Homil.* 53, in Gen.) and Theodoret (*Quæst.* 8, in Gen.); St. Augustine (*Contra Mendacium*, cap. x., and *De Civit. Dei*, lib. xvi. cap. 37.); St. Gregory the Great (lib. i. hom. 6, in *Ezech.*); St. Thomas Aquinas (2, 2, q. 100, a. 4, ad 3 et 3, *Sent. d.* 38, a. 3, ad 1).

we examine more closely the words of Esau, "Lo, I die, what will the first birthright avail me?" it would appear that they must have been exaggerated, and that he sold his birthright, not from need, but because he made little account of it, and longed after the lentil pottage; for which reason St. Paul (Heb. xii. 16) speaks of him as a "profane person," because he despised the sacred rights and blessings which were attached to the first birthright. Nor, indeed, is it possible to suppose that in the house of Isaac, of whom the Scripture says that he was "enriched and exceeding great," there could have been neither bread, milk, nor any food with which to satisfy the cravings of hunger. It is, of course, more difficult to find an excuse for the lie which Jacob told. If indeed he had, as we may imagine, the intention merely of obtaining his rights and gaining the divine blessing destined for him, and which was to be bestowed by his father's means, we may regard his false assertion, were it really a sin, as simply an instrument used by him for effecting his purpose; and looked at in this light, it would, if a sin at all, be a venial one. It is quite possible, however, that Jacob may have seen nothing sinful in his own conduct, and if so, he would have incurred no guilt. It might be, that regarding himself as being the first-born according to God's decree, he complied blamelessly and out of respect with the wishes of his mother, who took the responsibility of his conduct upon herself. Again, it might possibly be the case that he saw no deception in his act, from a conviction that it would be Isaac's will to give the blessing to him for whom it was intended by God. Thus we hear him say to his mother, not, "I fear lest my father should see that I have mocked him," but, "I fear lest he will think I would have mocked him"¹ (Gen. xxvii. 12). The objection to this, that Rebecca could have communicated the divine revelation to Isaac as well as to Jacob, is of no weight. It is most probable that she did not conceal it from her husband, but that he, believing her to be somewhat deluded by her preference for Jacob, paid no regard to it until the course of events brought about the fulfilment of the divine decrees. Revelations made to individuals are frequently not of such a nature as to preclude all doubt. And had Isaac known certainly that Esau was destined by God's will to serve Jacob, we may well feel assured that he would never have thought of making him lord over his brother.

Whether or
no those
types only
are of im-
portance
that are ex-
plained in
the New
Testament
Scriptures.

9. Although Scripture nowhere says that Joseph was a type of our Lord, the holy Fathers represent him as such with striking emphasis and unanimity. And unless we would be out of harmony with their teaching, we cannot call in question the fact of his

¹ *Sibi voluisse illudere.* St. Ambrose says with reference to Jacob (S. 2 de Jacob, cap. 1), "*Quam verecundus, ut patrem timuit fallere!*"

being so. The likeness, indeed, between the life of Jesus and that of Joseph is so obvious that none can fail to see it. Stolberg says truly, "Joseph was in such a manner (so striking and manifold) a type of Jesus Christ, that no room is left for unbelievers to ridicule far-fetched conclusions, or to ascribe so many coincidences to their god, chance." How many beautiful symbols, which are generally recognised as such by theologians, should we have to discard should we regard those types only as genuine which the apostles have pointed out and explained. It is the same with types as with the parables in the Gospels. "The Lord," says Pope St. Gregory (Hom. 15, sup. Evangelium), "has explained some of them to us, in order to incite the faithful to search diligently into the meaning of those which He has left unexplained." "Even so," says St. Augustine (Dialogue 53), "has St. Paul enumerated several types, but has only explained one, concerning which he says, 'for the Rock was Christ.' By thus giving us the meaning of one, he gives us to understand that the signification of the rest is reserved to reward our study." The certainty, however, which it is requisite to possess on such subjects should lead us to avoid private interpretations, and here, as in all other things, to accept the *unanimous* opinion of the Fathers. Were we, as a matter of individual fancy for instance, to see in Moses praying with extended arms a figure of Christ on the cross, this private judgment of ours would have but little weight. But this same opinion gains the greatest importance when we consider the long line of Fathers by all of whom it has been held, by St. Barnabas, Justin, Tertullian, St. Cyprian, St. Maternus, St. Ephrem, St. Gregory of Nazianzen, by St. Jerome and St. Augustine, by St. Cyril of Alexandria, St. Maximus, Theodoret, and many others.¹ Points of divergence there certainly are between many of the types and their antitypes; but this being so, is not a sufficient ground for rejecting their symbolical meaning, when we find it to be accepted by a number of the most celebrated of the Fathers. We should indeed be thus forced to reject many of the types which are indicated as being such in the Gospels and Epistles. Thus the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt was, according to St. Matthew (ii. 15), a type of the return of Jesus Christ, with Joseph and Mary, from Egypt into Palestine. St. Paul also says, that the rock from which Moses caused water to flow forth by striking it with his staff was a type of the Saviour, who pours forth His divine grace in streams over all the world. (See above.) But no one would therefore contend that all the circumstances in either case refer to Jesus Christ; for He

¹ Thus far we have followed the teaching of the Fathers in the explanation which we have given of the Scriptural types. The narrow limits of this work preclude, however, literal quotations from their writings.

did not pass through the Red Sea followed by a hostile army, and He is not a hard and lifeless stone; neither does the name "Massa" or "Meriba" ("chiding" or "temptation"), given to the spot on which the miracle took place (Exod. xvii. 9), apply to Him in any manner.

On the credibility of the miracles of Moses.

10. It is said that the Arabs of the present day who live on the shores of the Red Sea give the name of "The Path of the children of Israel" to a certain valley which opens down into a little bay. We are told this by Shar (?), a learned Englishman, who heard of it on the spot. It would occupy too much space were we to quote at length the many passages extant in the works of ancient writers, both Greek and Roman, which bear witness in favour of this, as well as of the other miracles, recorded by Moses. For these we refer the reader to Rohrbacher's History of the Catholic Church, book vi. We have before shown (vol. i. p. 62) that Moses could not possibly have invented the wonderful events he records; and no one, moreover, can doubt the truth of his writings without blaspheming our Lord and His apostles. Modern scepticism has made numerous efforts to explain the many and astounding miracles recorded in the histories of Moses by natural means, but has succeeded only in making its dishonesty of intention apparent. A detailed refutation of the arguments brought forward would exceed the limits of this work, and would besides be superfluous. Lovers of truth do not need it, whilst it would fail to convince such as are resolved on shutting their eyes obstinately against conviction.

Whether the types were under stood by the Jews.

11. From what has been already said, it has been shown how useful and salutary were the sacrifices of the law for the stubborn and blinded nation, whose glance could not penetrate to the depths of the mysteries which they concealed. According to the teaching of St. Thomas (lib. 2, q. 103, a. 2), the great importance of the sacrifices lay chiefly in this, that they included in themselves a solemn recognition of, and a protestation of faith in, a future Redeemer, and were for this reason especially fitted to keep alive and strengthen this faith among the people. It was because they were made to Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that the ancient sacrifices contained such an acknowledgment. For whilst the people expressed their belief in Jehovah, they at the same time confessed their faith in the future Saviour whom He had promised. This property of the Old Testament sacrifices belonged to them pre-eminently, by reason of their being types of the saving sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Neither can we deny that their symbolical meaning also was not able to be discerned and apprehended by faith. St. Augustine with reason teaches (*Contra Faustum*, book iv. cap. 2) that both to Moses and to the patriarchs were given the comprehension of the types of the old

covenant through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. We can have no reason for not accepting the opinion of this great Father, seeing that we learn from the Scriptures that the patriarchs beheld future events in the spirit of prophecy, and that the Lord said of Abraham, "Can I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, seeing he shall become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth shall be blessed?" (Gen. xviii. 17, 18). From these divinely-inspired men the meaning of the types was handed down to posterity, and more particularly to those whom God had appointed to the office of teachers. For it is certain that under the old as under the new covenant, there was, besides the written Scriptures, a body of oral teaching or "tradition," by which the written documents were completed and explained.¹ And through the instruction given by fathers to their children (Deut. xxxii. 7), and by the priests and scribes to the people in the synagogues, this traditional teaching became known to all. Thus the common people must have had at least an imperfect knowledge of the mystical meaning of the sacrifices. By the various and significant rites, they must have at least been brought to the perception of some mystery hidden beneath them. Whether they had a clear knowledge or no, of the work of redemption which was to be wrought by Christ Jesus, they possessed at any rate an *implicit* faith with regard to it, since they believed all that was accepted and taught by the Synagogue; in the same manner as the Christian, who, although he may not have an explicit knowledge of all the revealed truths, nevertheless believes whatever the Church believes and proposes to him to be believed. What has been said of the sacrifices, applies also to all, or almost all, the other types. Even if their symbolical meaning was not known to all the children of Israel, there were at least some among them who understood it and who could explain it to others. Thus St. Augustine says, speaking of the manna (Sermon 353, n. 3), "There were in the wilderness Israelites who understood what it was that they ate, to whom Christ in their hearts was more sweet than the manna in their mouths." So too, of the water which flowed from the rock he says, "that it was to the faithful the same drink that it is to us, namely, the same Christ: to them, Christ that was to come; to us, Christ that is come." And even though this mystical signification should have been unknown to the greater number of the Israelites, yet the wonderful food, like all the other miracles and benefits conferred by God upon His people by means of Moses and the patriarchs, would have stimulated their longing after the promised

¹ See Becanus, "Analogia Veteris ac Nove Testament," cap. xix. 7; Allioli, "Hebrew Antiquities," part ii. sec. 89, *et seq.*

Messias, through whom they trusted to obtain blessings and graces far greater and more numerous. Thus we see that when Christ had fed the five thousand men with five loaves, the Jews were not content, but said to Him, as it were, "Moses gave our fathers in the desert bread from heaven for forty years; yet he was only a prophet: what sign, therefore, dost Thou show, that we may see, and may believe, that Thou art the Messias, the Son of God?" (John vi. 30, 31.)

The duration of the government of the judges.

12. When it is stated that the high priests and judges were invested with the supreme office in Israel for over four hundred years, it is not intended to maintain that the rule of the men who are more especially spoken of as "Judges" lasted for that length of time. It is most probable that all the time from the establishment of the theocracy on Mount Sinai to the foundation of the kingdom is included in this period, which, if reckoned with reference to the high priests, is found sufficiently accurate; but not with reference to the judges, unless we include among them Moses and Josue. Petavius, and also the learned author of "*L'Art de Vérifier les Dates*," are in favour of this computation of more than four hundred years. Nothing, however, can be stated with confidence, for, as Haneberg (*Gesch. der bibl. Offen.*, p. 198) truly remarks, "the period of the judges defies any chronological certainty."

Testimony of heathen writers concerning the Messias.

13. The following passage occurs in Tacitus (*Hist.*, v. 13):—"The opinion was everywhere general among men, that it was written in the old books of the priests that at this time the East would gain the mastery over the West, and that it was from Judæa that the lords of the world should go forth." Suetonius, too, writes (in *Vesp.*, iv.), "All the East re-echoed with the most ancient and constant tradition, that according to the decrees of destiny the lords of the world were to proceed from Judæa. The knowledge of a future Saviour seems to have reached the heathen world, not only through their acquaintance with the Jews and the Jewish writings, but also by means of the prophecies of the Sibyls. That this was the case, we may gather from the fourth eclogue of the Roman poet Virgil, in which, thirty years before the birth of Christ, he sings the arrival of a heavenly child, and the return of the golden age, and refers in so doing to the words of the Cumæan Sibyl. "Already," he says, "the last age of the Cumæan song draws nigh" (the period, that is, draws near which the Cumæan Sybil has foretold). A new course of centuries has been begun. The goddess of Justice returns once more, the days of the golden age have come again, a new offspring is sent from on high . . . with whom will end the age of iron, and a golden age arise over all the earth. Under his dominion will the marks of our guilt be effaced, and the earth be freed from eternal fear. We shall receive

a divine life, . . . and shall rule over the world in peace," &c. Many other testimonies of a like nature, also from the Sibylline Books, are given by Lüken, in his work entitled "Traditions of the Human Race," secs. 65-76. With regard to the Chinese tradition concerning the Messias, the account given by the Jesuit Duhalde may here suffice. In his valuable and exhaustive "Description of the Chinese Empire" (vol. ii., edit. in four vols., p. 387), he says: "According to a tradition very commonly received in China, Confucius (the celebrated Chinese philosopher, born in the year 551 before Christ) was heard often to say that 'the true Holy One was to be found in the West.'" But none knew to whom his words referred. Certain it is, however, that sixty-five years after the birth of our Lord, Ming-ti, the fifteenth emperor of the house of Han, was so impressed by this saying, and also by the image of a man which presented itself to him in his sleep as coming from the West, that he sent forth thither two of his nobles, commanding them that they should not return until they should have found that Holy One whom Heaven had revealed to him, and learned his law. The messengers however, discouraged by the dangers and difficulties of the journey, proceeded no farther than to a part of India, concerning which nothing is known for certain. Here they found an idol representing a man named Foë, who, about 500 years before the birth of Confucius, had established a monstrous system of religion amongst the Indians. The envoys, having learned the superstitious usages of the country, returned to China, and spread abroad there the faith thus acquired.

HISTORY OF JESUS CHRIST.

SECTION XXI.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST—HIS HIDDEN LIFE—HIS BAPTISM.

“The world was at peace; Augustus was emperor of Rome, and Herod, the Idumæan, was king over Judea, when the promise of God and the words of the prophets were fulfilled. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the Redeemer of the world, was born of Mary, a Virgin of the royal race of David, in a stable in Bethlehem. His birth was announced by angels to the shepherds in Bethlehem, and by a star to the wise men in the East. Even in His infancy the cruelty of Herod sought out the divine Child to destroy Him. Therefore, at God’s command, Joseph, His foster-father, fled with Him and His mother Mary into Egypt, and did not return until after the death of Herod.” (Vol. ii. p. 237 or 238.)

MEAN indeed, and little answering to its expectations, seemed, in the world’s eyes, the birth of Jesus Christ.¹ But for us who are Christians it is full of heavenly mysteries, each circumstance possessing the highest significance. After many bloody wars, peace reigned throughout the world. God had so ordained, because it was as the Prince of Peace that Jesus Christ came. The sceptre of the earthly kingdom had departed from Juda, because a spiritual kingdom was to be founded by Christ. The Saviour was born of a virgin of the royal house of David, and by a special divine decree, not at Nazareth, the home of Mary, but at Bethlehem, the birth-place of David. It came to pass thus, that the prophecies

¹ There is no history so instructive and so worthy of our attention and meditation as that of Jesus Christ. But to give it in detail would exceed the limits of this work, and would lead to a repetition of much that has been already said. We will, therefore, confine ourselves to the principal facts, adding a few explanations in order to their better understanding.

might be fulfilled. (Vol. ii. p. 160 or 161.) Christ did not choose a royal palace as the place of His birth. He was born in a stable, wrapped in poor swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger, because He would show us, even in His birth, the nothingness of worldly riches, the vain love of which does but lead to eternal ruin. Not earthly heralds, but heavenly messengers, proclaimed the glad tidings of His nativity; for He is not the Son of an earthly monarch, but of the King of heaven and earth. It was not to the rich and great, but to the poor in spirit, that His coming was announced, because He came to "cast down the mighty from their seats, and to exalt the humble" (Luke i. 52). To them it was made known in the joyful words, "Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace to men of good will;" because the chief end of Christ's appearance in the flesh was for the promotion of God's glory, and the removal of that enmity which sin had placed between Him and man. Eight days after the birth of Christ, He received, at the first shedding of His precious blood, the name of Jesus, in token that it is through His blood alone that He saves us from the eternal ruin which sin has brought upon us. Already He presented Himself in the temple at Jerusalem as a voluntary sin-offering to His Heavenly Father. The old man Simeon received Him joyfully in his arms, and, full of the Holy Ghost, recognised in the feeble infant Him in whom all nations of the earth were to be blessed, the Saviour of the world, the "Light for the enlightening of the Gentiles." And they indeed had already been reached by the first rays of this world-rejoicing light; for already, led by a mysterious star, the kings had set forth from the distant East, to adore with the deepest reverence the King of heaven, and to offer Him their gifts. Those significant words which had been spoken in Paradise were already beginning to be fulfilled: "The woman's Seed shall crush the head of the serpent, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel." Burning with hatred and jealousy the impious Herod gave command for the cruel massacre, in which he intended that the new-born King should perish.

Thus began the battle between the kingdom of Satan and the kingdom which Christ had come to found on earth,—a battle which will continue until that last day, when the dragon, the old serpent, shall be “cast into the pool of fire and brimstone,” and “shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever” (Apoc. xx.).

“For thirty years Jesus lived retired in Nazareth of Galilee, subject to His parents, and increasing, as He grew in age, in wisdom and grace before God and man. In His twelfth year He went up with His parents to the celebration of the Paschal feast at Jerusalem; He remained three days in the temple, astonishing even the doctors by the wisdom of His questions and answers.” (Vol. ii. p. 276 or 275.)

It was undoubtedly the object of Jesus Christ to release men from the spiritual darkness beneath which they lay, and to gladden them with His divine and saving teaching. But many years passed, however, before He entered upon His public life, and began to cast abroad the heavenly seeds of His doctrine. He knew that the will of man was yet more enfeebled through evil inclinations, than was his understanding through ignorance; and He determined, therefore, to prepare men’s hearts to receive His words, by the most effectual teaching of an example of perfect virtue. He “began,” says the Acts of the Apostles (i. 1), first, “to do and,” then, “to teach.” Sin being a contravention of God’s law, is therefore disobedience—rebellion, that is, against God; and this rebellion arises in that pride which is constantly urging man to refuse to God the submission which he owes Him; “for pride is the beginning of all sin” (Ecclus. x. 15). Thus, above all things, Christ, through His hidden life in Nazareth, would teach us obedience and humility. For what greater encouragement could we receive to the practice of these virtues than the sight of the adorable Son of God, voluntarily dwelling in the form of a servant among the children of men, performing the humble and painful tasks of a common labourer, submitting Himself gladly to Mary and Joseph, His own creatures, and sitting as a scholar in the temple among the doctors, “hearing them, and asking them ques-

tions"? (Luke ii. 46). When He, the King of glory, did not hold it beneath Him to lead a poor, laborious, and despised life for thirty years, shall we, wretched sinners, be proud and arrogant, and refuse to submit ourselves to God, and to willingly bear the burthens of our state of life which His providence has laid upon us? If He, the Lord of the universe, obeyed perfectly and in the smallest things the will of His parents—of beings whom His almighty power had called into existence by a word—how should we, miserable creatures, allow ourselves to be led into disobedience and rebellion against God, or against those who stand to us in His stead? Shame on the folly of a wretched worm who, puffed up with vain knowledge, should exalt himself against the teachers whom God has appointed him; whilst the Eternal, Uncreated Wisdom presents Himself before the Jewish doctors as a humble scholar, and not as a teacher of the law! This idea is strikingly given in the words of Pope St. Gregory, "Humble thyself, O man, and thou shalt rise to the likeness of God; but if thou wilt lift thyself up, then shalt thou sink down to the likeness of the reprobate spirit" (Pastor., iii. 18).

"When Jesus was thirty years old He went to John to the river Jordan, and was baptized by him. The Holy Ghost descended upon Him in the form of a dove, and a voice was heard from heaven, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'"

At the time when Jesus was to begin His public teaching, the word of the Lord came to John, the son of Zachary, in the wilderness, that he should announce the coming of the Redeemer, and prepare the people to receive His teaching with believing hearts. This, God had foretold centuries before, by the mouth of the prophets concerning the Messias, "Behold, I send My angel before Thy face, who shall prepare the way before Thee." And John came and preached penance throughout all the country about Jordan, for that "the kingdom of heaven was at hand." The austerity and sanctity of his life witnessed powerfully to the truth of his words. Scripture says of him, that he "had his garment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was

locusts and wild honey." The whole country of Judea and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem came forth to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. This baptism, if it conferred no inward purification or sanctity, yet comprehended in itself an earnest call to penance, and imaged forcibly the baptism of Jesus Christ, through which is imparted to us the grace of the Holy Ghost. Jesus, who came down from heaven to earth to do penance for our sins, came also from Nazareth to John to be baptized by him. By His example He would confirm the teaching of His holy forerunner, that penance was the most fitting preparation for the reception of divine grace. At the time when the Son of God humbled Himself so profoundly in the presence of the multitude, who had flocked from far and near to John, it was His Heavenly Father's will to glorify Him before this great assemblage. The heavens were opened above Him, the Holy Ghost descended upon Him in the visible shape of a dove, and a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." John had already testified that One was to come after him, who should be mightier than he, the latchet of whose shoes he was not worthy to loose. He now signified clearly that He of whom he had spoken was none other than Jesus Christ. He pointed Him out one day with the words: "Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who taketh away the sin of the world. This is He of whom I said, After me there cometh a man, who is preferred before me; because He was before me. . . . And I knew Him not; but He (God), who sent me to baptize with water, said to me: He upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, He it is that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and gave testimony, that this is the Son of God" (John i. 29-35).

SECTION XXII.

JESUS IN THE WILDERNESS—HIS TEACHING—FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH.

“After this Jesus went into the wilderness, and there spent forty days in prayer and fasting.”

AFTER His baptism, Jesus, led by the Holy Ghost, went immediately into the desert track which lies between Jericho and Jerusalem, and there, as St. Mark relates, spent forty days in fasting and prayer, in the midst of the wild beasts. Although endowed from the first moment of His conception with all the fulness of the graces of the Holy Spirit, the Saviour of the world yet willed, before beginning His life of public teaching, to withdraw into solitude, in order that He might give Himself up to prayer and fasting, and so prepare Himself for His high calling. This example of our Lord shows us that fasting and prayer are holy and wholesome works, well pleasing to God, and which will draw down the blessing of Heaven upon our labours and undertakings. Instructed by this divine pattern, the Church has from the earliest times instituted days of fasting, especially the forty days of Lent, and has also always approved and promoted the pious usage among her children, of preparing themselves for the fulfilment of any weighty calling by prayer and fasting. When Saul and Barnabas had been admitted to the apostleship, and were about to begin the work of the conversion of the heathen, they fasted and prayed, together with the whole Christian community, in order that the Holy Ghost might descend upon them with all “the riches of His grace” (Acts xiii. 3). And for this same reason the Church still prays and fasts during the Ember days, as they are called, which are the times when priests are usually ordained.

When Jesus had fasted forty days, during which time He ate nothing whatever, He humbled Himself so far as to submit to the repeated temptations of Satan. If we consider all that Christ willed to suffer during His passion, from Jews

and heathens, the thought that the fallen spirit should so nearly approach the Son of God, as to tempt Him, to transport Him to a pinnacle of the temple, and to the top of a high mountain, will not surprise us; for, as Pope St. Gregory well asks (Hom. xvi. on the Gospels), "Were not the Jews who persecuted Christ, and the soldiers who crucified Him, Satan's accomplices? Why should we wonder that He suffered Himself to be led by Satan unto a mountain, when He delivered Himself up to be crucified by his accomplices?" Christ permitted the demon to tempt Him, because, for our consolation and instruction, He would be like us in everything except in sin; "For we have not," says St. Paul (Heb. iv. 15), "a High Priest who cannot have compassion on our infirmities, but One tempted in all things like as we are, without sin." From our Lord's temptation we learn—first of all, that temptations are in themselves no sin; and that, however strong and numerous they may be, they should never make us lose courage or become faint-hearted; and next, that we should never, in the fancied security of our virtue, hold ourselves safe from temptation; lastly, the example of our Lord teaches us how we should arm ourselves against the attacks of Satan, with the shield of faith and of the Word of God, and repel them with quickness and decision.

"Now Jesus began to preach the Gospel, *i.e.*, 'the good tidings,' of the kingdom of God. He went about through towns and villages, showing forth His divine mission by His holy life, and by miracles and prophecies. The people who heard Him were astonished. They followed Him in crowds, glorifying and praising Him as the true Messias, and saying, 'Thus hath never man spoken!'"

"Jesus," says St. Mark (i. 14, 15), "came into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is accomplished, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe the gospel."¹ In these words our Divine Redeemer revealed to mankind the aim of the exalted mission given to Him by the Eternal Father. The sin of

¹ Gospel is a Greek word, equivalent to "good," or "happy, tidings," and often stands for the whole of our Lord's teaching.

Adam, the father of our race, had closed to us the kingdom of heaven, which had been prepared for us from the beginning of the world; and although God, according to the counsels of His infinite compassion, granted to all, for the sake of the future Saviour, grace to earn heaven, and to enter it one day with Christ, yet the number of those who made use of this priceless grace was comparatively very small. Man, created according to God's image, had forgotten his heavenly destiny, and had directed all his endeavours towards the attainment of sensual happiness and earthly possessions. This evil was now to be checked. The time of grace promised and desired for centuries had arrived: the only-begotten Son of God appeared upon the earth in mortal flesh to open the gates of heaven by the sacrifice of His life, to show by word and deed the way thither, and to invite all to follow in His path. Jesus began His public ministry by announcing these glad tidings. "The time," He said, "is fulfilled; the kingdom of heaven is at hand." And, in order to arouse the indolent from their dreams, He cried out to all with a lofty and divine earnestness, "Strive to enter by the narrow gate, for it is time, and he who delays will be thrust into outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Luke xiii. 24, 28). It is true the gates of heaven were still barred, for the blood which is the price of our redemption had not yet flowed upon Calvary; but with the coming of our Lord, the kingdom of heaven had begun upon earth,—the kingdom of grace, of peace, of virtue, and of holiness,—the kingdom to which the children of God who are yet on their pilgrimage must belong, in order to be received hereafter into the everlasting kingdom of God's glorified children. No one, however, can attain to this divine kingdom unless he has first put off from him his sinful nature, and been born again by the grace of the Holy Ghost (John iii. 3); and no one can receive this grace who refuses to believe the word of the Son, whom God has sent into the world for the salvation of men. Hence our Lord's earnest exhortation to do penance, and believe the Gospel. "Except you do penance, you shall all likewise

perish" (Luke xiii. 5); and, "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John iii. 36). Jesus travelled through Galilee, Judea, and Samaria, preaching to all His heavenly doctrine. He taught everywhere: in towns and villages, in the open fields, on the mountains, in the temple, in the synagogues, and in houses; He preached both before thousands, and to individuals, to His disciples, and to His enemies the Pharisees and Sadducees. His teaching, as we have shown elsewhere, extended to all things that are necessary for us to believe, hope, and do, in order to be saved. It is for us, therefore, to work out our salvation through a firm faith in our Lord's teaching, and a faithful performance of His commands. We can attain to everlasting happiness, only in so far as we submit our understanding to His doctrine, and bring into conformity with it our wills and our actions. The teaching of Jesus was not like that of the wisdom of this world, which each one is free to examine, and then accept or reject, according to his individual opinion; but He taught a divine doctrine, which mankind is bound to accept and act upon with unreserved submission. This doctrine the Most High Himself solemnly attested upon Mount Thabor, commanding that it should be received with a believing heart. "For Jesus Christ," says St. Peter, "received from God the Father honour and glory: His voice coming down to Him from the excellent glory, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye Him! And this voice," continues the apostle, "we heard brought from heaven, when we were with Him in the holy mount" (2 Pet. i. 17, 18; Matt. xvii.). The voice upon Mount Thabor is, however, not the only testimony to the divinity of our Lord's teaching. Our Divine Redeemer Himself often declared, in the plainest terms, that He was the Son of God, one with the Father, and that His doctrine was the word of God, and divine truth. The incomparable holiness of His life; the numberless and undeniable miracles which He wrought in the sight even of His fiercest enemies; the utterances of the prophets, which all were fulfilled in Him; His own prophecies,

of the fulfilment of which¹ we are witnesses even to this day,²—all these are proof enough that in claiming to be the Son of God, and in declaring His doctrine to be God's word, He made no blasphemous pretension.

For all candid minds, the proof of the truth and divinity of our Lord's doctrine lay in its very nature, and in the power of conviction that it carried with it to His hearers. It was, humanly speaking, inexplicable how an unlearned man could have attained to the knowledge of a doctrine so pure and lofty—one, too, which had been never taught before. The people asked in astonishment, "Whence comes this wisdom? Is not this the son of the carpenter?" Even the ministers sent by the high priests and Pharisees to apprehend Him, returned with their task unperformed, saying, filled with wonder, "Never did man speak like this Man" (John vii. 46). And this high and mysterious doctrine was taught by our Lord in the plainest and simplest manner, chiefly in parables and similitudes, which were intelligible even to the most unlearned, and through which they were enabled to apprehend the truth. Thus, in the parable of the Prodigal Son, He sets before the sinner the depth of the misery into which he is plunged by sin, and thereby prepares in his heart the way to repentance; whilst, on the other hand, He presents to him the most moving picture of God's fatherly love and compassion towards His erring but repentant child: thus leading the sinner irresistibly to contrition and to reconciliation with God. In the parable of Dives and Lazarus again, He shows to men, in the one case, the earthly lot of the despised and afflicted servant of God, and his abundant reward and glorious triumph in the next life; whilst, in the other case, He exhibits the deceptive happiness of a sinner, who, revelling in pomp and luxury, had proved himself hard-hearted towards a starving fellow-creature, and his fearful end and terrible torments in the flames of hell. In

¹ On the fulfilment of the prophecies of Christ, vol. ii.

² On the confirmation rendered to His doctrine by the holiness of our Lord's life, by miracles and prophecies (ii. pp. 194-208, or 192-206).

the similitude of the Good Samaritan, He places before us an example of the charity which we owe to all men, at the same time showing us the wonderful love which He Himself feels for poor sinful humanity. It is, indeed, worthy of most special notice, that the characteristic feature of this divine and lofty teaching of our Lord's, was the way in which He inculcated upon His disciples the virtue of brotherly love; and that of a kind, of which, until then, the world had had no experience whatever. The brotherly love which Jesus taught embraces all men, excluding none; rich and poor, high and low, friend or enemy, all must be recognised and served as brothers. In order the more to ennoble and exalt in our eyes the commandment to love our neighbour, He joined it together with the love of God into one and the same precept; and furthermore taught us not only to look upon our fellow-men as our brethren and neighbours, but as God Himself, that is to say, as Christ our Lord; for that He will consider everything which we do to our neighbour as done to Himself. And, finally, to impress this commandment still more deeply upon the hearts of His disciples, He declared to them, the evening before His passion, that the command of loving our neighbour was in a peculiar manner *His* command, one which, as the expression of His last will, was to be to His true disciples an especially dear and holy legacy, and of which the faithful performance was to be their distinguishing sign. In fact, this one doctrine of the love of our neighbour, is sufficient to show the religion of Jesus Christ to be true and divine.

Our Lord did not endeavour to convince men by any elaborate demonstration, or by the employment of the arts of human eloquence, but "He taught as one having power" (Matt. vii. 29), that is, as God, with whose dignity it consists, that He should require faith, and complete submission of the reason. His speech was, if unadorned and simple, still "with power" (Luke iv. 32). Each word He uttered, enforced as it was by the divine dignity of His mien and aided by the might of grace, exercised a wonderful influence over the minds of His hearers. As He once was walking by

the sea of Galilee, He "saw two brethren, Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea (for they were fishers). And He saith to them: Come after Me, and I will make you to be fishers of men. And they immediately leaving their nets, followed Him. And going on from thence, He saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets: and He called them. And they forthwith left their nets and father, and followed Him" (Matt. iv. 18-22). Another time in passing by, He saw a man named Matthew sitting in the custom-house, "and He saith to him, Follow Me; and he arose up and followed Him" (Matt. ix. 9). But not individuals merely, many thousands followed Him, to learn heavenly truths from His lips. The multitudes collected from all parts, and listened the whole day to His preaching without weariness. They troubled themselves neither about food nor drink, desiring only to fill their souls with the supernatural bread of the word of God, broken for them by our Lord. The heart of Jesus was touched at the sight of this crowd so hungering after salvation, and He said one day to His disciples: "I have compassion on the multitude because they continue with Me now three days, and have not what to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way" (Matt. xv. 32). He then commanded the people to sit down, and with seven loaves and a few little fishes fed four thousand men, besides women and children. On a similar occasion our loving Saviour was moved to satisfy five thousand men, not counting the women and children, with five loaves and two fishes. It was no wonder therefore, if, after seeing such great miracles, the people should crowd after Him as though in triumph, praising and glorifying God; and that, seeing in Jesus all the marks of the promised Messiah, they should exclaim, "This is of a truth the Prophet (the Messiah) that is to come into the world" (John vi. 14).

"From amongst His disciples Jesus chose twelve, whom He named Apostles, or messengers. Their office was to bear witness to His doc-

trine and to His works ; and after He should have departed out of this world, they were to announce to all nations those things which they themselves had seen and heard from Him. Besides these, He chose seventy-two disciples, whom He sent before Him, two by two, into the places where He Himself was going. The twelve apostles and the seventy-two disciples, and those others who adhered to our Lord, formed the beginning of that society of the faithful which we call the *Church* of Christ, against which, according to His promise, the gates of hell shall never prevail. He chose Peter to be the visible head of this body upon earth ; He spoke of him, therefore, as the rock on which He would build His Church, and gave him the keys of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. xvi. 18, 19).

The blessed influence of the teaching of our Lord was not, like the Mosaic law, to be limited to the Jewish people alone. The prophets had often solemnly foretold that the Messiah should be the teacher of the nations, and the light of the heathen, and should spread the knowledge of the true God to the ends of the earth. And Christ Himself expressly declared to His disciples, that His Gospel of the kingdom (of God) should be preached in the whole world, to all nations (Matt. xxiv. 14). But He Himself had not received from His Father the commission to preach to the heathen: He "was sent," as He said, "to the sheep that are lost of the house of Israel" (Matt. xv. 24). Had it been our Lord's intention to propagate His doctrine amongst the heathen nations by means of the dead letter of Scripture, He would doubtless Himself have committed it to writing ; but the divine structure which He came to found on earth, the one saving religion, was to be raised on no frail and shifting foundation. It was not His will to intrust it to the written characters of a lifeless book, and thus deliver it over to the arbitrary judgment of the human reason:—oral teaching ; the living word was, according to the counsels of His everlasting wisdom, to be the appointed means for the propagation of the divine doctrine amongst men. Therefore St. Paul says, "Faith then cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Rom. x. 17). In order, therefore, that the Word of God might be maintained pure and undefiled to the end of time, our Lord instituted a teaching office, to

which He promised that the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth, should remain with it for ever. For the administration of this teaching office, He chose twelve of His disciples, whose names the evangelist St. Matthew thus recounts: (x. 2-5) "The first, Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother. James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas and Matthew the publican, and James the son of Alpheus, and Thaddeus (Judas). Simon the Cananean, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him." These He led with Him in His daily rounds, that they might be witness of all His deeds, and be initiated more fully into the spirit of His doctrine, and into the divine mysteries. And after His ascension they were to go into all the world, announcing to the nations what they had seen and heard concerning Him, and thus transmit to posterity the revelation of Christ. And Jesus said to them, "You shall be witnesses unto Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and even to the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts i. 8). Therefore He called them His apostles, that is to say, His messengers, heralds, or plenipotentiaries.

During His own earthly life He confirmed them in their sublime mission, by sending them forth amongst the twelve tribes of Israel to preach the Gospel of the kingdom of God; and He granted them power "over unclean spirits to cast them out, and to heal all manner of diseases and all manner of infirmities." Later on, He associated with them seventy-two disciples, and "sent them two and two before His face into every city and place whither He Himself was to come," so that they should prepare the hearts of all for His coming. And that it was His will that men should receive and listen to these His messengers and representatives, He declared emphatically, saying, "He that heareth you, heareth Me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me. And he that despiseth Me, despiseth Him that sent Me." "He that receiveth you, receiveth Me; and he that receiveth Me, receiveth Him that sent Me" (Matt. x.; Luke x.). And He pronounced, moreover, at the same time a most severe judgment upon any city

which should refuse to receive the ministers sent by Him : “ Amen I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city ” (Matt. x. 15).

Not all the Jews who heard the preaching of our Lord and His apostles rejected the grace of the heavenly visitation. Many willingly received it, believed the Gospel, did penance, and received baptism. (John iii. 22, iv. 1, 2.) And thus there came to be formed a society of faithful believers, which, if small in the beginning, visibly increased as time went on, and after the accomplishment of redemption by the saving death of our Lord, spread itself over the whole world, embracing Jews and Gentiles alike, and uniting them into one great spiritual kingdom. This small society was the commencement, the fruitful bud, as it were, of the Church of Christ, which in the Gospel is often called the *kingdom of God*, and the *kingdom of heaven*. Concerning it our Lord said, “ The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field. Which is the least indeed of all seeds : but when it is grown up, it is greater than all herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come, and dwell in the branches thereof ” (Matt. xiii. 31, 32). But our Lord’s will was to provide not *teachers* only for His Church, but, as the prophets had likewise foretold, *priests* also to perform the divine mysteries, and *shepherds* according to His own heart for the guidance of the faithful. For the Church, as the divinely-constituted remedy for the ills of the human race, and the appointed guide to salvation, needed to possess authorised ministers and dispensers of the means of grace intrusted to her, while, as a well-ordered kingdom gathered out of all the peoples and nations of the earth, she required legitimate and visible rulers or pastors to govern individuals as well as the community. Our Lord, therefore, gave to His apostles not only the charge of teaching, but the priestly and pastoral charge also of His flock. He gave them a power which even angels had never received, a power belonging to God alone, that,

namely, of binding and loosing, of forgiving or retaining sins. (Matt. xviii.; John xx.) Moreover, wisely considering the requirements of human society as it actually exists among us, He did not impart to all His apostles the same dignity and power. It was to be their office to gather all the peoples of the earth together into the divinely-instituted ark of salvation,—to unite them in one single visible kingdom: this kingdom must therefore be held together by some visible bond of union—it would require, that is, in the same manner as any human society, a common visible head, to whom all should owe obedience. The apostle Peter was chosen by our Lord for this visible headship of His Church upon earth. He was not indeed invested with the actual authority of his office until after the resurrection of Christ from the dead; for as long as our Saviour was Himself amongst His disciples in person, they needed no other master or head, for access to Him was always open to all. But even during His mortal life, our Lord in many ways distinguished St. Peter from amongst the other apostles, and gave him the promise that He would make him the sure foundation-stone of His Church, and would give him full and absolute power in it. This great promise St. Peter received, when our Lord, in reward of his solemn confession of His divinity, addressed to him the significant words, “Thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven” (Matt. xvi. 18, 19).

SECTION XXIII.

OUR LORD'S CHARITY AND BENEFICENCE—THE HATRED AND ENVY OF HIS ENEMIES—THE RAISING OF LAZARUS—SOLEMN ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM.

“Our Lord conferred the greatest benefits upon the Jewish people. He made the blind to see, the lame to walk; He cured diseases, raised the dead to life, and alleviated every human misery; nevertheless He had many enemies, especially amongst the scribes and Pharisees, because He charged them with their sins and vices, and because it was not His will to found an earthly kingdom, and to raise them to earthly dignities. They were constantly watching His words and deeds, but could never find any fault to impute to Him.”

THE active course of our Lord's life was one unbroken proof of the intense love He bore to man. Benefits and blessings followed all His steps. It was the task of His life to dispense help and grace to the poor, the oppressed, and the needy. He declared this Himself when in the synagogue at Nazareth. He applied to Himself the words of the prophet Isaias (lxi. 1): “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, wherefore He hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the contrite of heart. To preach deliverance to captives, and sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of reward” (Luke iv. 18, 19). Who could tell the number of those to whom our Lord gave comfort and relief, whose tears He dried, and whom He delivered from sin and evil of all kinds? If He entered a city or town, men brought to Him from far and near the possessed, the diseased, the blind, the lame, the deaf, and, at a word from His divine mouth, they were cured, and returned praising God. Whoever, oppressed by any trouble, came with confidence to Jesus, found a hearing. That even the greatest sinners were not rejected by Him, we know from the histories of Mary Magdalene, of Zacheus, and of the woman taken

in adultery; and, above all, from the reproach addressed to Him, that He was the friend of publicans and sinners. He Himself took, as the illustration of His mode of action, the physician who visits not the healthy but those who are sick, and the good shepherd who seeks the lost sheep amongst thorns and briars, and carries it back rejoicing to the fold. If for higher reasons He appeared at first to reject the poor Chanaanite woman, His loving heart was unable to withstand her repeated prayer. The sight of the widow of Naim, who followed sorrowing to the grave her only son, filled Him with so deep a compassion, that unasked, He raised the dead man to life, and gave him back to His weeping mother. And far from being wearied by the number of those needing His help, He lovingly invited them with the words, "Come to Me, all ye that labour and are heavy burdened, and I will refresh you." The children who were brought to Him He took tenderly in His arms, laid His hands upon their head, and blessed them. To His disciples who would have repelled them, He said, "Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven" (Mark xiii. 14). Even for the obdurate city of Jerusalem He felt the most loving compassion. How often, as He said Himself, would He not "have gathered her children together as the hen doth gather her chickens under her wings!" But she would not; and He could therefore only mourn over her unhappy fate (Matt. xxiii. 37).

As love generally creates a corresponding love, it would but have been natural to suppose that all who had the happiness to know our Divine Redeemer, should have met Him with sincere love and gratitude. But who would believe it? There were hearts which remained hard and obstinate in spite of every proof of the tenderest love. There were Jews by whom Jesus was hated and persecuted. However strange this may seem, it had but too sure a foundation in the characteristics of the class to which these reprobate men belonged. The enemies of our Lord were to be found chiefly among the scribes and Pharisees, many of whom had seats in the council

amongst the high priests;¹ but as we have already said, this class of the Jews had sunk into a condition of extreme spiritual misery. Their imagination pictured to them the kingdom to be founded by the Messias as one of great earthly splendour, wherein they themselves were to hold the first places. But Jesus, far from manifesting any intention of founding such a kingdom, preached only of lowliness, penance, self-denial, and detachment from earthly goods; and, to give the more force to His teaching, Himself walked in the way of humiliation and contempt of the world. When one day a scribe came to Him, and, in the expectation of a life of ease, declared himself ready to follow Him everywhere, our Lord answered him, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath nowhere to lay His head" (Matt. viii. 19, 20). Thus sharply undeceived, the proud Pharisees and scribes came to regard as their worst foe, this poor, and in the world's eyes insignificant, Messias. Their hate grew the more intense as our Lord set Himself to combat the evil influence which they exercised over the people, and exposed unflinchingly their shameful hypocrisy, addressing to them the fearful words: "Wo to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; because you shut the kingdom of heaven against men! For you yourselves do not enter in, and those that are going in you suffer not to enter. . . . You serpents, generation of vipers, how will you flee from the judgment of hell?" (Matt. xxii. 13, *seq.*) But instead of ceasing from their crimes, they hardened their hearts. Instead of recognising Jesus from the numberless miracles which He worked, as Him whom God had sent, and joyfully joining with the people in giving praises to the Most High, they ascribed those miracles to the agency of Satan, and blinded through envy, saw in our Lord nothing but the despicable son of a carpenter, who was bent on under-

¹ The name of "high priest" was not given only to the actual high priests, but to the ex-high priests; also to the heads of the twenty-four classes of priests, and to those, too, who came of the family of the high priests.

mining and destroying the consideration in which they themselves had till then been held. Full of malice, they sought on all sides how they might overthrow Him. They followed Him everywhere, watching and lying in wait to discover in His words or actions some opportunity for accusing Him of a breach of the law. But in vain. They could discover nothing that cast a shade upon Him. When our Lord demanded, "Which of you shall convince Me of sin?" (John viii. 46), they could not answer Him. Neither could they bring slander or calumny to bear upon Him, for He lived publicly before the eyes of the whole people. There was nothing for them, therefore, but to proceed against Him by force, and their impiety carried them so far, that more than once they attempted to take His life. But each time Christ brought their design to nothing, because His hour was not yet come.

"In the third year of His public teaching, shortly before the Easter feast, Jesus raised from the dead Lazarus, who had been buried four days. The people who witnessed this miracle rejoiced aloud, and when He came to Jerusalem the multitude went out to meet Him with branches of palm and olive, spread their garments on His path, and sang 'Hosanna to the Son of David!' Then the rage of His enemies knew no bounds, and they resolved upon His death."

Our Lord performed one of the most magnificent of His miracles at Bethania, where He raised Lazarus to life, "for the glory of God, and that the Son of God might thereby be glorified." The fact that Lazarus was really dead lay beyond a doubt, for when our Lord came to Bethania he had been four days in the grave, and decomposition was already far advanced. Arrived at the place of interment, our Lord had the stone that covered the mouth of the grave rolled back; then, lifting His eyes to heaven, He besought the Father to hear Him, that the spectators might believe that He had sent Him. Then with a loud voice He cried out, "Lazarus, come forth!" and at this all-powerful word the dead man rose up, and came forth in his grave-clothes out of the grave, alive and well. Who could now describe the astonishment and

joy of the numbers who stood around? Many believed, and congratulated themselves on having found the long-desired Messiah. The fame of this miracle spread abroad. When, therefore, Jesus soon afterwards made His royal entry into Jerusalem, humbly sitting upon an ass, as the prophet had foretold, multitudes of the people went out to meet Him with branches of palm and olive which they strewed before Him, others spread their garments in His path, and all cried out in exultation: "Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed be He that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest" (Matt. xxi. 9). The Pharisees were beside themselves with rage at this triumph, and said to one another, "Do you see that we prevail nothing? Behold the whole world is gone after Him" (John xii. 19). The resurrection of Lazarus had already so inflamed their anger, that they and the high priests summoned a council, and under pretence of providing for the welfare and security of the people, took the resolution of putting Jesus to death. In their anger they even wished to destroy Lazarus also, because on his account many believed in the Messiah. Fear of the multitude, who were enthusiastically attached to our Lord, had hitherto restrained them from putting their evil designs against Him into execution. The diabolical wickedness, however, of one of His disciples now came to their aid. Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, whom Jesus had loaded with favours and proofs of the tenderest love, declared himself ready, a few days before the Feast of the Passover, to betray his Divine Lord and Master for the paltry sum of thirty pieces of silver.

SECTION XXIV.

THE DIVINE DECREE CONCERNING THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST—HIS VOLUNTARY OBEDIENCE—THE LAST SUPPER—THE WASHING OF THE FEET—INSTITUTION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT—OUR LORD'S DISCOURSE—HIS PRAYER.

“Jesus knew that the hour of His bitter passion had arrived, and, resigned to the will of His Heavenly Father, He looked forward to death. When therefore He had, as the law prescribed, eaten of the Paschal lamb with His apostles, He took bread into His holy and venerable hands, and lifting His eyes towards heaven, to God His Almighty Father, He gave thanks and blessed the bread, and gave it to His disciples with the words, ‘Take ye, and eat; this is My body which shall be delivered for you.’ Then taking the chalice with the wine, He gave thanks again, blessed it, and gave it to His disciples, saying, ‘Drink ye all of this; it is My blood, the blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for you and for all, for the remission of sins. As often as ye shall do this, do it in commemoration of Me.’ Thus Jesus instituted that sacred feast, in which He truly gives Himself to the faithful under the forms of bread and wine, for the nourishment of their souls.”

As disobedience to God had plunged man into sin and misery, the obedience of the incarnate Son of God was to pay the ancient debt, and reconcile earth to heaven. Therefore the Apostle says, “For as by the disobedience of one man (Adam), many were made sinners; so also, by the obedience of One, many shall be made just.” On account of the union of the divine and human natures in one Person, every one of Christ's actions possessed an infinite value, and therefore an infinite atoning power. If God had so willed, one single act of obedience at the first moment of His mortal life might have sufficed to destroy all sin and complete the work of redemption. God, however, had from eternity decreed otherwise. Christ was to appear first of all as teacher of the world, was to confirm His divine mission by signs and wonders, and by His holy life was to be the perfect model for our imitation. He was to establish His spiritual kingdom upon earth—Holy Church; He was to bequeath to her His

teaching and the treasury of His grace, and then to redeem man by obediently offering to His Father in heaven the sacrifice of His life. And as His whole life, together with all His actions and sufferings, was one continual exercise of the most perfect obedience, so too, it needed, that for the redemption of man, He should become obedient unto death, even to the death of the Cross. Without the painful sacrifice of the Redeemer by a bloody death, our sins would not have been blotted out, nor mankind saved from everlasting death. For such a victim of obedience was required by the Most High, in amends for our disobedience, and through His submission to the will of God¹ could satisfaction alone be made.

Jesus, "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. ii. 3), knew all the depths of the mystery of the Divine counsels. He had repeatedly foretold all the circumstances of His passion, and with boundless love for God and man, accepted death with the fullest and most perfect resignation. As God, He, one with the Father, had decreed it from all eternity; and as man, at His entrance into the world, He had said, "Behold I come to do Thy will, O God" (Heb. x. 9). All the intrigues and violence of His enemies could have availed nothing, had it not been His will to suffer and die for the salvation of the world. "No man," He said one day to His disciples, "taketh My life from Me, but I lay it down of Myself: and I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again;" and again shortly before His passion, whilst His enemies were approaching, He said, "The prince of this world cometh, and in Me he hath not anything. But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father hath given Me commandment, so do I: Arise, let us go hence" (John x. 18; xiv. 30, 31). And our Lord not only died *because* He so willed, but *when* He willed. He chose to die at the time of the

¹ The same reasons are given for this divine will as those with which the catechism answers the question, "Why did Christ will to suffer so much for us?" See the explanation, vol. ii. p. 313.

Paschal feast, that man might be redeemed from everlasting death on the same day as that on which the Jews celebrated the event that foreshadowed this mystery;—their deliverance, namely, from Egyptian slavery; and He executed this choice in spite of all the efforts of His enemies to the contrary. In vain had the high priests and the Pharisees resolved not to seize and slay Him until after the Pasch, lest there might be a tumult amongst the people who so short a time before had welcomed Him with such enthusiasm. (Matt. xxvi. 5). Our Lord had expressly said to His disciples, “After two days will be the Pasch, and the Son of Man will be given up, that He may be crucified.” And thus it turned out. God brought it about that the high priests changed their determination, because of the offer which Judas made to betray His Master into their hands, in the night before the day of the feast.

This Paschal feast, which was to prove so all-important, was the fourth since our Lord had begun His public ministry, and it fell upon a Friday. Since all the Jewish feasts began on the evening before the actual day, it was needful that the Paschal lamb should be slain and eaten, as prescribed by the Mosaic law, on the Thursday evening. This law, which had been instituted with reference to Himself, and which was thenceforth to be fulfilled in a higher and more spiritual manner, our Lord desired now to observe. He was Himself, as we have already explained, the true and divine Paschal Lamb, who, sacrificed once in a bloody manner upon the cross, was ever after to be offered up and consumed daily upon our altars in an unbloody manner, as a pledge of the banquet one day to be celebrated in the kingdom of heaven. To prepare everything according to custom for the feast, our Lord had sent Peter and John on before Him into the city, and in the evening He himself came, and with His twelve apostles sat down to table. And He said to them, “With desire I have desired to eat this pasch with you before I suffer. For I say unto you, That from this time I will not eat it till it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God” (Luke xxii. 15, 16); that is to say, I shall keep no more with you the Paschal feast, until I

keep with you the Paschal feast of eternal happiness. From which words we see also that the Jewish Pasch was a type of that heavenly banquet, that feast which our Lord went on further to promise to His disciples in the words, "You are those who have held out with Me in My temptations; therefore do I prepare you a kingdom, as My Father hath prepared one for Me, that you eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, sharing with Me my eternal joy." And this happiness is also prepared for us, if we, like the apostles, endure temptation. After the meal was over, Jesus arose, laid aside His outer garment, and took a linen cloth and girded Himself with it. Then He poured water into a basin, and began to wash the feet of His disciples, drying them with the linen cloth with which He was girded. After He had washed their feet, and had resumed His garment, He seated Himself again at the table, and said to them, "Know you what I have done to you? You call me Master and Lord, and you do well, for so I am. If then, I, being your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also." Even for the faithless Judas, Jesus performed this service of love, which was one usually rendered by slaves only, or the lowest in the household. What sublime humility, what unspeakable condescension, the Man-God, the only Son of the Eternal Father, at the feet of a creature and His own betrayer! Whose heart would not be touched—would not be stimulated and inflamed to heroic and joyful imitation—by this example? But our Lord desired to give us another lesson by the washing of the feet, as the words He spoke to Peter testify, "He that is washed, needeth not but to wash his feet;" which means, he who is free from grave sins only requires further purification from the smaller faults and shortcomings, which adhere to us like dust. We ought, especially before receiving Holy Communion, to endeavour to attain this purity. According to the Fathers, this is the reason why our Divine Redeemer performed the washing of the feet immediately before the institution of the blessed Sacrament.

The way in which Jesus instituted this mysterious and wonderful Sacrament, in which He poured forth the whole riches of His grace and the fulness of His love towards men, has been already mentioned and explained. (IV. 233.) It must, however, be here called to mind, that in this most sacred mystery, Christ instituted not a sacrament only—a divine food and drink for the nourishment of our souls—but also at the same time the unbloody sacrifice of the new law, when, with the words, “Do this for a commemoration of Me,” He gave the apostles the command and the power to offer this sacrifice.

“After the supper, Jesus spoke some time longer to His apostles with the tenderest love. He promised them the Holy Ghost for a Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, who should teach them all things, and should remain with them for ever. After which He went forth to the garden of Gethsemani, on the Mount of Olives, to pray.”

Whilst Jesus was still seated at table with His apostles, He foretold to Judas Iscariot that he was soon to betray Him, and to Peter, that even that very night, before the cock should crow twice, he would deny Him thrice. As soon as the meal was over, the traitor withdrew to accomplish his crime; and Jesus now spoke in tones of the most fervent love to His disciples:—He would now, He said, be but a short time with them, but their hearts were not to be troubled: He was going to His Father, in whose house He would prepare a dwelling for them; then He would come again, and take them to Himself; their joy should be great, and no one should take it from them. Again He renewed His promise to send them the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, who should remain with them and in them for ever. In a special manner He now inculcated upon them the precept of Christian charity, saying that if they loved one another as He had loved them, by this would men know they were His disciples. Lastly, He admonished them to live in Him, as the branch in the vine; to pray, and to persevere patiently and confidently in suffering and persecution. “In the world,”

He said, "you will have persecution; but have confidence, I have overcome the world."

When Jesus had thus spoken to His apostles, He raised His eyes to heaven and said, "Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that He may give everlasting life to all Thou hast given Him. And this is everlasting life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent. I have glorified Thee on earth; I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. I have manifested Thy name to the men whom Thou hast given Me. . . . I come to Thee, holy Father; keep them in Thy name. . . . Preserve them from evil. . . . Sanctify them in truth. As Thou hast sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. . . . And not for them only do I pray, but for those also who through their word shall believe in Me; that they may be all one, as Thou, Father, in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us . . . that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast also loved Me" (John xvii.). After this prayer was ended, Jesus went out with His disciples to the mount of Olives, and entered a garden called Gethsemani, to pray there.

SECTION XXV.

THE PASSION OF OUR LORD, TO THE TIME OF HIS BEING CONDEMNED TO THE DEATH ON THE CROSS.

"And now His whole passion became fully present to His soul. A mortal anguish fell upon Him, and His sweat ran like drops of blood down to the earth. 'Father,' He prayed, 'if it is possible, let this chalice pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt.'"

THE image of the Son of God, sorrowful even unto death, may well be to us a surprising one; and we may inquire most naturally the cause of such trouble, of such indescribable mental anguish. This agony of our Divine Redeemer was, above all things, caused by the dreadful picture of the innu-

merable sins which had already been, and which were to be, committed, of which the whole weight was now laid upon Him, and for all of which He must do penance and make satisfaction to the Divine Majesty. All these, in their full horror and deformity, were now present to His divinely-pure and holy soul. And the knowledge, that for many of those whom He came to redeem at the price of His own life, His most sacred blood would be shed in vain, and that it would even increase the condemnation of such as should misuse His grace, was in part the cause of the anguish which weighed on our Divine Redeemer; whilst in part too His affliction was occasioned by that clear and certain prevision which He had, of all those sorrows, outrages, and sufferings which were so soon to overwhelm Him. (II. 300.) This pain and horror at the approach of suffering and death was natural to the humanity of our Divine Lord, but it was not, however, involuntary, nor of such a kind as to cast His soul into disturbance. (II. 331, n. 1.) Throughout His whole life, all the circumstances of His passion and death had been as clearly before His mind as now in the garden of Gethsemani; but the fear and horror which they would naturally inspire had never overcome Him, until now that He granted them admission. "He began," as the holy evangelist St. Matthew says, "to grow sorrowful and to be sad."

That it should be the will of Christ to take upon Himself these interior sufferings and this unspeakable agony of mind, is to us a revelation of His divine wisdom and love. Thereby we learn how great was the sacrifice of His obedience, and how sublime and perfect was the submission of His human will to God. We should have less to admire in His obedience had the divine nature so consoled, strengthened, and beatified the human nature, as to render it inaccessible to the bitterness of the chalice of death. We may further learn from this mortal struggle of our Divine Lord's, how tender and how immeasurably great is His love for the unhappy children of Adam. "Nowhere," says St. Ambrose (on St. Luke, book x.), "do I so much admire the divine love and greatness

of Jesus. He would have served me less, had He not taken my feelings upon Himself. He mourned for me, Who had no reason to mourn for Himself. He laid aside the felicity of the Eternal Godhead, and gave Himself up a prey to sufferings, on account of my weakness. He took my sorrow on Him, in order to give me His joy; in our nature He descended to the sorrows of death, that He might raise us up to life in His nature. 'He hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows' (Isa. liii. 4). He bears our sins; He mourns for us." What a source of sweet consolation and most salutary teaching, is this example of the Man-God! What could be more encouraging to us in our troubles, in times of grief and despair, than the thought that Jesus, our Saviour, had experienced all this and much more? What could more effectually dispose us to take refuge in prayer in all our needs and sufferings,—to trust God in every sorrow, and to submit ourselves entirely to His holy will? What could more constrain us, even in the bitterest interior trials, to treat our neighbour with kindness and charity, than this example of our Saviour in the garden of Gethsemani, who, trembling with mortal fear, and covered with a sweat of blood, prayed but the more earnestly from the very depths of His heart to His Heavenly Father, saying, "Not My will, but Thine be done;" and who, in the midst of His bitter conflict with human weakness, far from being unmindful of His disciples, went to them three times, in order that He might admonish them tenderly to watchfulness and prayer?

"Meanwhile, the traitor Judas drew near, with a troop of armed men, and Jesus let Himself be taken prisoner, and be led before the council. Here He was mocked, spit upon, and struck in the face, and then, as being worthy of death, delivered by the High Priest to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, who sent Him to King Herod. But His innocence was acknowledged both by Herod and Pilate."

The hour of the powers of darkness and of the enemies of Christ, foreseen as it had been from all eternity, was now come. Judas, with his devilish purpose in his heart, drew near at the head of the band of soldiers and with a kiss, the

sign of goodwill, he delivered up the Saviour to the power of His enemies. And Jesus, instead of destroying the sacrilegious traitor on the spot, received his kiss with inexpressible meekness, and with the utmost tenderness addressed this son of perdition, saying, "Friend, whereto art thou come?" "Judas, dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss?" He whom the sea and the winds obey, allowed Himself to be seized, bound, and gagged like a common malefactor! It was not, however, because He was unable to resist, that our Saviour suffered such depths of ignominy. It was only after He had given them the power, that the soldiers could lay hands on Him; for, by simply saying the words, "I am He," He had caused the whole troop to fall powerless to the ground. Like a lamb, Jesus permitted Himself to be led over the brook Cedron and into the city by the tumultuous rabble, first to Annas, the father-in-law of Caiphas the High Priest, and then to the High Priest himself, where the priests, the scribes, and the elders of the people were assembled. The Judge of the living and the dead stood as a criminal before those who will one day themselves have to appear before His judgment-seat! To all the accusations which were brought against Him by false witnesses, Jesus replied only by silence. At last the High Priest questioned Him about His divinity and His Messias-ship. "I adjure thee, by the living God," he said to Him, "that Thou tell us if Thou be the Christ, the Son of God." And to this Jesus solemnly replied, "Thou hast said it. Nevertheless, I say to you, Hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of the power of God, and coming in the clouds of heaven." And upon this the High Priest, full of hypocrisy and Satanic malice, rent his garments, saying, "He hath blasphemed; what further need have we of witnesses? What think you?" And all cried, "He is guilty of death" (Matt. xxvi. 26). The judgment was now pronounced. Until break of day Jesus was given over to the Jewish soldiery, who turned their whole malice on the adorable Saviour. They began to spit on Him and to buffet Him. Others blindfolded Him, and smote His face, and said, mock-

ing, "Prophecy unto us, O Christ, who is he that struck Thee?" And, blaspheming, many other things they said against Him. On the following day the whole council assembled, and again went through the mockery of a trial. On the repetition of the question as to whether He were Christ the Son of God, Jesus again answered that He was, and that He should sit hereafter at the right hand of the power of God (Luke xxii. 66-70).¹

The high priests and the scribes, being however aware that they could not themselves execute the sentence of death upon Jesus, therefore brought Him bound to Pilate, and accused Him of stirring up the people in all Judea, and of making Himself King. When Pilate asked Him if He were really King of the Jews, He replied, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would certainly strive that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now My kingdom is not from hence." And to the question which followed, "Art thou a king then?" Jesus made answer, "I am a King. For this was I born, and for this came I into the world; that I should give testimony to the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice" (John xviii. 37). This answer, so full of divine grandeur and dignity, carried conviction to the heathen governor, and he declared before the assembled people that he found no cause in the man. But the Jews, full of fury, heaped one accusation after another upon the Divine Redeemer, until Pilate, in order to rid himself of their importunity, sent Jesus, as being a Galilean, to the tribunal of Herod the tetrarch of Galilee. Here His bloodthirsty

¹ The great council reassembled itself in the morning in greater numbers than during the night before, and again went through the trial, and repeated the sentence of death, in order to give it the more force; "for, as it appears from the Talmud (book of the Sanhedrim), it was necessary that a valid sentence of death should be pronounced during the daytime, and in the customary place, which was a chamber of the temple. This explains, too, the statement of St. Matthew (xxvii. 3-5), that when Judas 'brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the ancients,' he cast them down in the temple." Lamy in Harmon., lib. v. cap. 30. See Danko, *Hist.-revelat.*, § xxvii. p. 127, *infra*.

enemies renewed their accusations with fresh violence, but Jesus to all their malicious charges answered not a word. With silent endurance He suffered the tide of malice to overwhelm Him. Herod, disappointed by seeing no display of our Lord's miraculous powers, began, together with his court, to mock Him, clothing Him in a white garment as a fool, and so, amidst the derision and laughter of the populace, sent back the Lord of the universe again to Pilate.

“Now Jesus was scourged and crowned with thorns, notwithstanding that His innocence had been acknowledged; and then He was condemned to the death of the cross, owing to the savage pertinacity of the high priests and the people, who preferred Barabbas the murderer, to be released before Him.”

It was the custom of the governor at the Paschal feast to set free a prisoner, whomsoever the people might choose. As he knew that the high priests had delivered up Jesus out of jealousy, and that they insisted on His death, although neither he nor Herod had found Him guilty, he now bethought himself of setting free, by the favour and voice of the people, One to whom, but a few days since, they had given the most striking proofs of their attachment. He therefore brought forth Barabbas, a notorious robber who was then in prison, and, placing him beside Jesus, said to the assembled people, “Whom will you that I release to you, Barabbas, or Jesus, who is called Christ?” and, incited by the high priests, the whole people cried out together, “Away with this man, and release Barabbas to us.” And when Pilate, in weak uncertainty, inquired what he should then do with the King of the Jews, the fearful answer, “Crucify Him! crucify Him!” came forth as from one mouth. The heathen governor upon this released the murderer whom the people desired, but condemned Jesus to be scourged, hoping thereby to content the excited populace. In this most shameful and agonising punishment (ii. 332 n. 2), by which the pure body of Jesus was most terribly rent and disfigured, were the words of the prophet Isaiah literally fulfilled (Isa. liii.), “We have seen Him, and there was no sightliness in Him, . . .

And we have thought Him, as it were, a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted. But He was wounded for our iniquities, He was bruised for our sins; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His bruises we are healed."

The brutal soldiery, not content with the savage cruelty which was thus perpetrated, went on in their barbarous sport to deride the royal dignity of the King of glory. They threw over His shoulders an old purple cloak, "platted a crown of thorns, which they set upon His head, and, placing a reed in His hands, bowed the knee before Him, and mocked Him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And then spitting upon Him, they took the reed, and struck His head" (Matt. xxvii. 29, 30). In this pitiable condition, which had excited his own compassion, Pilate led Jesus forth, and said to the assembled crowd, "Behold the man." But the Jews were not moved by this spectacle of sorrow. Hardly had they looked upon Jesus than they exclaimed with renewed fury, "Crucify Him! crucify Him!" And when Pilate made yet one effort more to save Him, they cried out, "If thou release this man, thou art not Cæsar's friend. For whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar" (John xix. 12). Thus was Pilate's opposition overcome. In the sight of the whole people he washed his hands, and said, "I am innocent of the blood of this just man, look you to it." Then, in frightful blindness, they pronounced the ominous words, "His blood be upon us, and upon our children." And Jesus was delivered up to them to be crucified.

SECTION XXVI.

CONTINUATION OF THE PASSION OF CHRIST—SIGNS AFTER HIS DEATH.

"Like the worst of criminals, Jesus was led forth loaded with His heavy cross to the place of execution on Mount Calvary, and there crucified between two murderers. It happened just as the prophets had foretold. His hands and feet were pierced with nails, the soldiers divided His clothes amongst them, and cast lots for His garment. And in His

burning thirst, they offered Him vinegar and gall. Even the high priests and the elders mocked Him. All this Jesus bore with the most admirable meekness and patience ; He prayed for His enemies, saying, ' Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' For three hours Jesus hung in mortal agony on the cross. The sun was darkened, and all nature mourned. At last, crying with a loud voice, ' It is consummated ! Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit ! ' He bowed His head, and died."

THE innocent Lamb of Sacrifice was now delivered up to the triumphant rage of His enemies. They hastily stripped the purple cloak from His shoulders and put His own garments upon Him, and then Jesus received with unutterable love the cross of shame and pain, upon which He was to accomplish the work of our redemption. Burdened with its weight, He walked with painful and difficult steps through the streets of Jerusalem to the neighbouring hill, called Golgotha, or " The place of Calvary." Overcome with pain, and weak from the loss of blood, He sunk repeatedly beneath the weight of the cross. But great as were His sufferings upon this sorrowful journey, He thought far less of them than of the punishment which was about to fall upon the faithless city—the slayer of her God. " Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not over Me," He said to the sorrowing women who followed Him ; " but weep for yourselves and for your children. For, behold, the days shall come wherein they will say, Blessed are the barren and the wombs that have not borne, and the paps that have not given suck. . . . For if in the green wood they do these things, what shall be done in the dry ? " (Luke xxiii. 28, 31.) When Jesus, followed by Simon the Cyrenean, who had at last been forced to take up the cross, had reached Mount Calvary, the place of execution, His clothes, which adhered fast to His open wounds, were torn from His body with cruel violence, and He was placed on the cross, His bed of suffering. He willingly stretched forth His hands and feet, and the sharp nails were driven through the veins and sinews deep into the wood. And then the cross was raised aloft. And the only Son of God hung between heaven and earth, His arms extended as though towards the men of all

nations and times for whom He suffered such agony, and whom He longs to embrace and press to His loving heart, that He may bestow on them eternal blessedness. Over His head were the words, written by Pilate in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews." The high priests had in vain objected to this inscription being placed there. It remained in spite of their opposition. The whole world was to learn that Jesus of Nazareth is that long-desired King, foretold by the prophets, who shall rule from the throne of the cross.

Who does not feel astonished at the marvellousness of the Divine decrees? The very enemies of Jesus, even while in the act of gratifying their devilish malice, were aiding to fulfil the prophecies, and thus establish the kingly dignity of the crucified. Daniel had (ix. 26) prophesied, "Christ shall be slain;" this prophecy was fulfilled through the wickedness of the Jews. The royal prophet (Ps. xxi. 17, 18) had placed in the mouth of our Redeemer the words: "They digged My hands and My feet; they numbered all My bones." And just so the soldiers did, when they violently stretched the limbs of Jesus upon the cross, and fastened His hands and feet to it with the nails. And again, in His being crucified between two thieves, the prophecy of Isaias was accomplished: "And with the wicked He was reputed." (Mark xv. 28.) When, too, the executioners gave wine mixed with gall to the Redeemer before His crucifixion, and again before His death offered Him vinegar, who does not recall the prophetic word of the Psalmist (Ps. lxviii. 22): "And they gave Me gall for My food, and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink." Likewise it was concerning the Messiah that it had been prophesied (Ps. xxi. 19): "They parted My garments amongst them, and upon My vesture they cast lots." And lo! in the presence of the dying Saviour we behold the soldiers dividing their spoil, just as it had been foretold a thousand years before. The jeers, too, of the high priests and scribes, the fearful blasphemies which, uttered by them at the foot of the cross, do but afford additional proof that all the prophecies

have been fulfilled in Jesus. "All they that saw Me," complains the Messiah in the 21st Psalm, "have laughed Me to scorn; they have spoken with the lips and wagged the head: He hoped in the Lord, let Him deliver Him; let Him save Him, seeing He delighted in Him." And in Wisdom again we find the words (ii. 16, 18): "He glorieth that He hath God for His Father: let us see then if His words be true; for if He be the true Son of God, He will defend Him, and will deliver Him from the hands of His enemies." Does it not seem that the holy evangelists, (St. Matthew xxvii., St. Mark xv., St. Luke xxiii.) in thus specially bringing the high priests before our notice, would have us believe that they had borrowed from Scripture the very expressions which they made use of, in order to gratify the malice of their hearts against our Divine Lord?

If the conduct of the Jews shows to us an excess of ingratitude, hatred, and malice, that of Jesus reveals to us an overflowing and abounding love which is in truth divine. Penetrated as He was with suffering and shame, He breathed forth only tenderness and love towards men. He prayed fervently for His tormentors, saying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And to the thief who had at first blasphemed Him, but afterwards asked for mercy, He promised Paradise. He recommended all mankind, in the person of His beloved disciple St. John, to His mother standing at the foot of the cross, saying to her, "Behold thy son."

For three full hours Jesus hung on the cross in unspeakable torment; His limbs wrenched out of joint, His sacred body covered with blood and wounds, and parched with burning thirst; whilst His soul too, was sunk in an abyss of misery. Man, for whose salvation He offered Himself, remained cold and unmoved; but lifeless nature mourned for Him, the sun miraculously hid its light, and fearful darkness covered the earth (ii. 232, or 230, n. 11). With a loud voice, unnatural in one who is dying in the extremity of exhaustion, Jesus cried out, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit," and bowed His head. The Lord of all voluntarily submits

to death, that in so doing death might be overcome, and mankind delivered from death eternal. "Death is swallowed up in victory." And with triumph we may now exclaim, "O grave, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? But thanks be to God, who hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. xv. 54-58.)

"At the moment when Jesus yielded up the ghost, the earth quaked, the rocks were rent, the veil of the temple was torn asunder from top to bottom, the graves opened, and the bodies of many of the saints who had slept, arose and appeared in Jerusalem. The centurion and the soldiers who stood by the cross were seized with fear, and cried out, 'Truly this was the Son of God.' Thus was Jesus 'the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world' (1 John ii. 2)."

Whilst Jesus was wrestling with death, the Jews had said to Him in scorn, "If thou art the King of Israel, descend from the cross, and we will believe in Thee." The Redeemer did not comply with the demand thus made by them in their folly, but accomplished the inestimable sacrifice of His life. And how completely then, was their malice put to shame. So long as life remained in His body, Christ hung, the reproach of all the people, apparently helpless on the tree of scorn. But scarcely had His soul departed, than He showed Himself the King, not of Israel only, but of the whole universe. The earth trembled from its foundations, the rocks were rent, the graves were opened and gave up their dead.¹ The heavy and richly-wrought curtain which separated the sanctuary from the holy of holies in the temple, was rent in two from top to bottom, in order to show that the typical sacrifice and ceremonies were at an end, and that Jesus Christ, in whom

¹ "And behold," says St. Matthew, "the veil of the temple was rent in two, from the top even to the bottom, and the earth quaked, and the rocks were rent. And the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints that had slept, arose. And coming out of the tombs, after His resurrection, came into the holy city, and appeared to many." (Matt. xxvii. 51-53.) From this passage we see that it was from the time of the death of Christ that the graves were opened, thus showing forth the victory gained over death, in the death of Christ; but the bodies of the saints came forth and appeared in Jerusalem only after the resurrection. For it was meet that Christ, whom the Apostle calls "the first-born from the dead" (Col. i. 18), should be the first to rise from the dead as the first conqueror of death.

the new covenant is founded and accomplished, is the true High Priest, who hath entered through His own blood into the true heavenly sanctuary, that He may appear now in the presence of God for us, and obtain for us everlasting redemption. (Heb. ix. 12, 24.) So mighty and overpowering were the signs which accompanied the death of Jesus, that even the most obstinate were obliged to acknowledge the working of the divine power. The centurion and soldiers on guard, terrified by what they heard and saw, gave God praise and said, "Truly this was a just man. This man was the Son of God." And all the people who were present struck their breasts and were penetrated with contrition, as they left the hallowed spot where the bloody sacrifice for the redemption of the world had been accomplished.

SECTION XXVII.

OPENING OF THE SIDE OF CHRIST—HIS BURIAL—HIS RESURRECTION—HIS TEACHING CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF GOD—HIS ASCENSION.

"It was about three o'clock on the Friday afternoon that Jesus died. Then a soldier pierced His side, and blood and water flowed forth. His body was taken from the cross, and laid in a new grave, which was hewn out of the rock. The Jews had it sealed, and placed guards before it. But on the third day, before sunrise, the earth shook, and the crucified Lord rose gloriously from the dead."

HERE, as in all else relating to our Lord's passion, we may discover a deep and significant meaning. He willed to die on a Friday, in order that, being as He was to rise again on the third day, it might be upon the first day of the week, on the day, that is, upon which God commanded light to come forth from darkness, that His resurrection should take place. There was, too, an especial fitness in the *hour* at which our Saviour chose to die, it being the third hour of the afternoon the very hour, that is, at which the symbolical lamb was daily sacrificed on the altar of the temple!

By the sacrifice of His life the redemption of the world had been wrought, and the course of shame and humiliation accomplished. The sacred body of Christ, therefore, was to be no longer subjected to scorn and outrage. The soldiers broke the legs of the two thieves, but that a bone of Jesus should not be broken had been already prefigured, in the yearly sacrifice of the Paschal lamb. (John xix. 36.) His side was opened with a lance, and His body was laid in the grave. And these things were done that the fact of His death might be placed beyond dispute, and His resurrection rendered therefore the more certain and glorious. Most especially there is a deep meaning hidden in the opening of our Lord's side, to which the significant manner of St. John's narration bears testimony. And even His burial also was glorious, taking place as it did under circumstances which precluded every dishonour; His sacred body being laid in the tomb untouched by corruption, and united still to His divinity!

With regard to the mystery above mentioned, the Fathers teach, that in the water which flowed from the pierced side of Jesus is symbolised the water of baptism by which we are cleansed from our sins, and by the blood the precious blood which nourishes our souls in the holy Eucharist. The Church, the holy Fathers thus infer, came forth from the side of the expiring Redeemer, as did Eve from the sleeping Adam; for the Church owes her existence to baptism, since no one without it can become one of her members; while her life she owes to the holy Eucharist, because through it the divine grace is maintained and nourished, without which her members would be but dead members.

To the end that our Lord, deserted as He was by His apostles, should be interred with honour, God so ordered it that two citizens of weight should provide for His burial, in a manner which was suitable both to their piety and their wealth. Joseph of Arimathea, a noble councillor, went boldly to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. In this request he was joined by Nicodemus, also a member of the council;

—the same who had formerly come to Jesus by night, and who now brought a hundred pounds weight of myrrh and aloes.¹ Together they took the Lord's body reverently down from the cross, and wrapped it with the precious spices, according to the Jewish custom, in a clean linen cloth. Then they laid it in a new tomb hewn out of the rock, in a garden close at hand, and rolled a great stone against the opening of the tomb. It was needful that a new tomb should receive the body of our Saviour, in order not to give the enemies of the Christian religion the opportunity for saying, that it was not Jesus of Nazareth, but another, who had left the grave;—or again, that He had not risen of His own power, but through contact with the bones of another, like the man whose body was cast into the grave of the prophet Eliseus. (4 Kings xiii. 21.) The grave, too, was hewn out of the rock, that the reproach that His disciples had broken open the grave and taken the body might lose all semblance of truth. And that such a suspicion too, might be impossible to every honest mind, it was God's will that the high priests and Pharisees should obtain the consent of Pilate to place a watch before the grave, and should seal it with jealous care. Thus our Lord's bitterest enemies contributed to exalt His glory. Of the descent of the soul of Christ into Limbus, whither it went to comfort and set free the imprisoned spirits of the just,—of its reunion on the third day with His glorified body, and of the resurrection of our Lord from the grave, as the conqueror of sin, death, and hell;—of these we need not now speak particularly, as they have been already treated of at length in the second volume, in the explanation of the fifth article of the Creed.

“For forty days Jesus constantly appeared to His disciples; instructed them concerning the kingdom of God, that is to say, the Church; gave

¹ Myrrh is a white balsam which flows from certain trees in Arabia. Aloes is a sweet-smelling and precious wood, obtained in the East Indies, which was pounded and mixed with the balsam, and placed on the corpse. The dawning of the Sabbath did not allow them to embalm the body, therefore the holy women were anxious to pay this honour to the Redeemer as early as possible on Sunday morning.

them the power to forgive sins ; and appointed Peter to the headship of the Church, with the words, "Feed My lambs, feed My sheep." (John xxi. 15-17.)

Fitting as it was that, when the work of redemption was completed, our risen Lord, should as man take possession of that glory, which as God, He had received from His Father before the world was, He nevertheless, for the sake of His disciples, remained yet forty days upon earth. In order to convince them, before all things, of the reality of His resurrection, and to banish all doubt from their incredulous hearts, He appeared constantly during this time, sometimes to one alone, sometimes to several together, and on one occasion to five hundred at once. (1 Cor. xv. 6.) He spoke with them familiarly, sat at table with them, ate with them, and showed them His hands and His feet. "See My hands and My feet," He said, "that it is I Myself: feel, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see Me to have." He even invited the unbelieving Thomas to put his hands into the sacred prints of His wounds, and into His open side, that he might convince himself that it was with the very same body that was pierced and nailed on the cross that He, the Redeemer, had risen from the dead. But it was not only to strengthen the faith of His apostles that Jesus remained so long upon earth, but on account also of the instruction which He desired to impart to them. He explained the Scriptures to them, and, as St. Luke tells us in the Acts of the Apostles, spoke with them concerning the kingdom of God, gave them instructions, that is to say, for the establishment and government of the Church, and as to all things relating to the means of salvation under the new covenant. For, with one exception, (xiv. 21) the expression, "the kingdom of God," is used in the Acts of the Apostles in its widest sense, and not only to signify God's kingdom in heaven. At the same time Jesus imparted to His apostles the full powers necessary for the administration of the sacraments, and for the government of the Church. "As the Father hath sent Me," He said to them, "so do I send you." The power to forgive sins He

bestowed upon them, when, breathing on them, He said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins ye shall forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins ye shall retain, they are retained." (John xx. 21, 23.) On one occasion, when He came to His disciples as they were fishing on the Lake of Tiberias, in pursuance of the promise which He had before made to Peter, of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, He now established him as His own representative in the pastoral office and in the headship of the Church, and gave him, on his thrice-repeated assurance of love, the thrice-repeated commission to feed His lambs and His sheep. "To which of the apostles," asks St. Bernard (book ii., to Pope Eugenius), "were all the sheep so unconditionally and unreservedly committed! 'If thou lovest Me, Peter, feed My sheep.' What sheep, then? The inhabitants of this or that city or region, or of such and such a kingdom? 'My sheep,' He says. Who cannot see clearly that not some, but all, are here meant?" Shortly before His departure from this world, our Lord solemnly ratified the mission of the apostles, assigning to them the whole world as the field of their labours, and promising them His own co-operation until the end of time. This, according to some authorities, took place on a mountain in Galilee, where, as St. Matthew tells us, Christ appeared one day to His apostles. But there are good grounds for the opinion of others,¹ that this final commission was given on the Mount of Olives, during the last apparition of our Lord, immediately before His ascension.

The following account is in accordance with the view last mentioned:—

"When Jesus appeared for the last time to His apostles, He commissioned them to go forth into the whole world, to preach the Gospel, and to baptize all nations 'in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' For this end He bestowed upon them the same power which He Himself had received from His Heavenly Father, and promised that He would be with them all days, even to the end of the world. Standing upon the Mount of Olives, He stretched forth His hands over them, and, whilst in the act of blessing them, ascended into heaven before their eyes."

¹ See Maldonat or Allioli on Matt. xxviii. 18.

At the last, our Lord appeared to the eleven apostles in Jerusalem, as they were assembled at table, and He told them to remain together in the city and await the coming of the Holy Ghost, who would enable them, by the power of His grace, to perform their sublime and arduous task, of spiritually renovating and reforming a fallen world. Then He led them out to the Mount of Olives, that place which was memorable as having been the scene of His bitter agony, but which was now to witness His most glorious triumph. Approaching His apostles He said to them, "All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." (Matt. xxviii. 18-20.) "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be condemned." (Mark xvi. 16.) As God, Jesus had possessed all power from all eternity; and as man also, in virtue of the union of His human nature with the Godhead, from the first moment of His existence in time. It was also GIVEN to Him as to the Saviour of the world, who had merited it through His bitter sufferings and death, and who, consequently, had the most just title to it. In virtue, then, of this power and omnipotence, He sent forth His apostles into the world, to teach the mysteries of the faith to the people of all countries and kingdoms, to give them the holy Sacraments, and to inculcate upon them the faithful observance of the precepts of the Gospel. (II. 465.) Thus, it was from Jesus Christ, the supreme Lord of heaven and earth, that the apostles received commission, and with it also authority and power to make subject all nations of the earth to the sceptre of the Crucified. No earthly power, therefore, has a right to interfere with or circumscribe them in the exercise of their office. All, on the contrary, whom their message shall reach are bound, under pain of damnation, to accept it, and to enter the kingdom of the Son of God. Their task is, beyond measure, a high and arduous one, and its accomplishment surpasses all human strength; but Jesus

commanded them neither to fear nor hesitate. "Fear not," He said; "behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world. I will stand at your side; I will work in you, and with you, all days, for hundreds, for thousands of years, till the end of the world shall come." But in what manner was this promise of our Lord to be fulfilled, seeing that the apostles were but mortal men, whose earthly course would soon be finished? Our Lord's words, to have any meaning at all, must have been spoken, not of the apostles only, but of all those who were to succeed them in the teaching, priestly, and pastoral offices until the end of time. (II. 482.) Therefore, not the apostles alone, but their successors also, the bishops of the Catholic Church, are the messengers of God; they, like the apostles, have received from God their spiritual power and authority, and in the exercise of this power no earthly sovereign has a right to limit or oppose them.

When the Divine Saviour had spoken thus with His disciples, He ascended triumphantly before their eyes into heaven, there to take everlasting possession of His glory on the right hand of the Father. (II. 363.) A thin cloud had already withdrawn Him from their sight, but they yet remained gazing after Him. Suddenly two men, in shining white garments, stood beside them, and said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand you looking up to heaven? This Jesus, who is taken from you up into heaven, shall so come as you have seen Him go into heaven." (Acts i. 11.) He shall come again at the end of time with His angelic hosts to judge the world. Then woe to all who have denied and refused to recognise Him in His lowliness! But happy they who have believed in Him, owned Him, and made His teaching and example the rule of their lives! Here below they have shared in His humiliation and sufferings; and there in His kingdom they shall sit on glorious thrones, and reign with Him for ever in undescribable splendour and joy.

REVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF JESUS CHRIST.

"In the beginning was the Word," says the evangelist St. John, "and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . In Him was life: and the life (the living Word of the Father) was the light of men—the true light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. . . . He was in the world, and the world knew Him not." From the beginning, then, God had revealed Himself to the world through His only-begotten Son, the Eternal Word. For man, created after the Divine Image, had never been deprived of grace, light, and instruction; neither, as the apostle says, had God left Himself without testimony. But the darkness, the heart of man, that is to say, darkened through sinful concupiscence, had not received nor understood the divine revelation, but obstinately rejected it. And now when the fulness of time was come, through the boundless mercy of God, "the Word was made flesh," in order that He might Himself instruct mankind, and translate them from the realms of darkness to the blessed kingdom of light. "And we saw," says the beloved disciple (i. 14), "His (the Man-God's) glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." We saw—that is, the signs and wonders by which God glorified Him—we saw His transfiguration on the mountain, His resurrection from the dead, His glorious ascension into heaven, a glory which the Son of God alone has or can have. "That which we have seen with our eyes," St. John says elsewhere, "which we have diligently looked upon, and our hands have handled, we declare unto you" (1 John i. 1-3). Who is there that can cast doubt on the truth of their testimony—a testimony supported by the holiness of their lives, by the miracles which they worked, and the death which they endured in its defence?¹ And century after century, what multiplied proofs present themselves to us of its truth! The glorious victories of the cross over the abominations of the heathen world, gained as they were in spite of prison, rack, and flames; and, again, the ceaseless extension of God's kingdom, which holds its own, against the opposition of all enemies, unsupported by any earthly might, but borne forward by the miraculous power of God.

But if Jesus is the Son of God, the light of the world, and source of all truth and wisdom, so is He also our Saviour and teacher. His gospel is God's Word, and His religion, the one true religion

¹ For the detailed defence of the credibility of the evidence of the apostles and evangelists, see i. 57 or 58.

which leads to life eternal. "Children of men," our Divine Lord says to us, "if you desire to attain the end that God has placed before you; if you desire to attain perfect happiness, to apprehend truth, to escape death, and to possess life, then know that 'I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No man cometh to the Father, but by Me' (John xiv. 6). I am the way that you must walk in, the truth that you must believe, and the life that you shall obtain. Follow My example, believe My teaching, accept My grace, and so shall you obtain supernatural life, and through it that eternal life to which the Father has called you. Whosoever follows not this road, goes astray; whosoever does not believe this truth, abides in darkness; and whosoever has not this life has incurred eternal death."

But let no one, however, deceive himself; let no one yield to the delusion that he can find Jesus, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, elsewhere than in the kingdom of God which He has founded, that is, in His holy Church. For she was founded by Him, to the end that she might guide us safely along the way which He has pointed out, that she might transmit to us unalloyed the doctrine which He taught, and dispense to us those means of grace which He has bequeathed to her for the imparting and maintaining of the supernatural life. Therefore, if we desire to work out our salvation and to save our souls, we must hear with humble submission the Church of Christ. In despising her, we despise Christ, disregard God, and lose our souls. "And if he will not hear the Church," says our Lord, "let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican." (Matt. xviii. 17.) To answer the question, "Where is the true Church founded by Christ?" there needs no long or tedious research. "Thou art Peter" (the rock), said Jesus to Simon Barjona, "and upon this rock I will build My Church." And again, "Feed My lambs; feed My sheep." The true Church, therefore, is that which has the successor of Peter for its teacher, pastor, and visible ruler, which has at its head him who, in the person of Peter, received full power to feed, guide, and govern the whole Church. This note is one which none other than the Roman Catholic Church possesses, and this is so evident that no other religious body has ever laid claim to it. That Church alone, therefore, is the true Church which recognises the Pope, the successor of St. Peter, as its supreme head. And as she alone is the true Church, so too is the religion which she teaches that one true faith which has been revealed by God. It is the Catholic religion alone which points out to us the true way, teaches us the true faith, and unlocks to us the treasures of grace won for us by Christ. This is the divine religion, the germ of which was planted in Paradise, whose mysteries were prefigured in the Old Testament, and whose grace and glory was foretold with

joyful rapture by the prophets. It appeared, like a bright hopeful dawn, in the Mosaic law, but attained its midday splendour under Jesus Christ. This is the one saving religion which, rooted in Christ, takes strength and growth from Him, brings the humble child of earth into communion with God, and conducts him to community of life with God here, and to the heavenly kingdom hereafter.

The divinity of this religion, which it is our happiness to profess, will manifest itself yet further to our minds when we come to view the centuries which have elapsed from the ascension of our Lord to our own days; when we recognise the sure and visible protection which God has afforded to His holy Church, and become acquainted with her battles and her victories, her spirit, her charity, and the benefits and blessings which we owe her.

REMARKS ON THE HISTORY OF JESUS CHRIST.

Herod's
barbarous
conduct not
incredible.

Barbarous commands such as that of Herod's, which nowadays seem to us almost incredible, were by no means unheard of, before milder manners had been introduced by the influence of the spirit of Christianity. We find orders of this kind given under the Egyptian and Persian kings (Exod. i., Esther iii.), as well as under the Roman emperors. Even the much-commended Emperor Titus, on the occasion of a feast in honour of his father Vespasian at Berytus, had no scruple in causing several thousands of Jews to be torn in pieces by wild beasts. (Josephus, "*De Bello Jud.*," xviii. cap. 3.) Of Herod, profane history tells us that his cruelty and jealousy knew no bounds. To these passions his three sons, his wife Mariamne, and the whole royal race of the Maccabæans or Asmodeans, fell victims. He caused forty youths also to be burned alive at Jericho for having torn down his golden eagle from over the gate of the temple.

On the estimation we ought to have of the doctrine of Jesus Christ.

Familiarised as we have been from youth with the doctrine of our Saviour, we are unable for the most part rightly to judge of its sublimity, or to value as they deserve the incomparable benefits which it has been the means of conferring upon us. Just so it is with the charms and beauties of the visible creation, and the superfluities of blessings which God there spreads around us. Because they are common everyday things, they cease to strike us; our senses have become accustomed to them, and we regard them as though they were of necessity, thus and not otherwise. But let us suppose ourselves to have been living, without an idea of anything more cheerful, in a dark cold prison, and to be suddenly brought forth into the bright loveliness of a fine spring morning, or the

glory of a summer evening,—how differently would the light and warmth and the varied wealth of scent and colour then strike us! So too, in order to estimate the full benefit of the doctrine of Jesus, it would be necessary for us to have lived the life of Pagans, and to have experienced in our hearts the void, the hopelessness, and the misery, occasioned by an entire uncertainty regarding things the most important, and which touch us most nearly. How different then, would the teaching of Christianity seem to us! With what wonder, gratitude, and joy should we not then behold and embrace that abundance of blessings, which come to us with and through it.

Let us take that doctrine that touches us most nearly, one which is the groundwork of all temporal prosperity, as it is also the fundamental principle of Christian society—the doctrine, namely, that all men without exception are the children of God, the children of one Father in heaven, and consequently, as brothers of one family, are bound to regard, love, and cleave to one another with their whole hearts. How much did the Pagan world know of this doctrine? Could it indeed even have imagined, that God, in His love for us, would go so far as to regard what was done for the lowest and meanest of mankind, as done to Himself, and would reward it accordingly? Can heathen times furnish us with but one single example of that heroic love of our neighbour, which is ready to sacrifice not possessions only, but even life itself, for the suffering and needy, for enemies as well as for friends? Yet this is what is every day taught and practised among Christians. Amongst the heathen, we may seek it in vain. On the contrary, the manner in which Pagan laws overlooked and trampled on the dignity and rights of individuals is sad and almost incredible. A man is worth no more than a beast, often even less; and the laws, instead of punishing this contempt and undervaluing of humanity, tacitly, at least, approve and authorise it. Pagan philosophy also—what is its judgment upon this system? It has nothing to advance against it. Again, let us but call to mind the Roman amphitheatres which in ancient times were to be everywhere found. To what uses were they destined? what sights were there to be seen? Human beings forced to a bloody encounter with wild beasts, and men's lives sacrificed by thousands in one day, and all for the pleasure of their fellow-men. Again, with regard to the barbarous yoke of slavery, which weighed so heavily upon the greater part of the human race in heathen times, the more cultivated and enlightened states formed no exception to the rest of the world in this matter. On the contrary, Attica, the most cultivated state in Greece, had 20,000 citizens and 400,000 slaves—twenty slaves, that is, to every freed man; and in this reckoning moreover, the female slaves are

not included. In Corinth the number of slaves was still greater; and in Rome there were rich men possessing from 10,000 to 20,000. And of what kind were the relations subsisting between masters and their slaves? According to the Roman law, which ultimately prevailed wherever the Roman arms had made way for it, the slave had no rights, but was absolutely at the mercy of his master. The latter might ill-treat, torture, or kill him with perfect impunity. For a slave to prefer a complaint, or appeal to a contract, against his master, was unheard of and illegal. What indeed, according to the judgment of the acute reasoner Aristotle, constitutes the difference between a slave and an ordinary tool? This only,—that one has life, and the other has none. “The slave” he defines to be “a living tool” (*Polit.*, i. 3). And were the dignity and rights of humanity any better considered among other nations? We may judge from the following among many other examples:—The lawbook of the Persians (*Vendidad Sade*), which is ascribed to the celebrated teacher Zoroaster, occupies itself more with the duties of men towards dogs than towards other men. To give a dog bad food, or to wound a dog seriously, are sins to be expiated by from 200 to 800 stripes. So, too, it is well known in what honour the cow is at the present day held in India; so much so, that to kill a cow is a greater crime than to murder a parent. On the other hand, to kill a pariah, who has ventured to cross the threshold of a Brahmin’s house, is forbidden by no law, and is a right which no one would call in question. And even this is but one instance among a thousand of the contempt in which these men are held, and of the malignity and injustice with which they are treated. These pariahs too, are they a mere handful of beggars, insignificant in proportion to the rest of the population? Are they unhealthy, or leprous, or such as to be in any way obnoxious to the safety of their fellowmen? No; they number one-fourth of the people, and have all the natural rights of other men.

It is by no means intended to deny that in the laws and customs of the heathen world and in the writings of its philosophers there is very much that is true, and beautiful, and honourable to human nature. But it is in vain to seek there for anything at all approximating to the teaching of Jesus Christ. And this not only as regards those mysteries, which He, the Divine Son, abiding from eternity in the bosom of the Father, was necessarily alone able to reveal to us; but, on the contrary, we find that in such things as are accessible to mere reason—in that moral philosophy, which occupies itself with the nature of man, and his relations with his Creator, truth is defaced by manifest error, or else advanced with such hesitation and uncertainty, as evidences no firm conviction on

the part of the writer. Indeed, the attitude of the Pagan mind on all questions save a very few, was one of doubt and hesitation. What, for instance, does the divine Plato say of God in his "Timæus"? "The father and founder of the universe," he says, "is hard to find; and when he is found, it is impossible to express him in a manner intelligible to all." He proposes, moreover, in his plan for a model State, regulations which would render that family life which is the foundation of every healthy polity impossible, and which are in themselves offensive to morals and humanity: thus, in order to check the over-increase of population, he requires that children defective in body or mind shall be exposed; and on this point we find that Aristotle and the lawgiver Lycurgus also agree with him. It is with these most hopeless words that Cicero, who had all the results of heathen science at his command, ends his beautiful treatise on the immortality of the soul: "If immortality be a delusion, it is at least a beautiful one. It consoles and elevates us in life, and in death we need not be ashamed of it" (Senect., cap. xxiii.). St. Augustine (Civ. Dei., xix. 1) tells us that, according to Varro, the most learned Roman of his time, there might be counted no less than two hundred and eighty-eight opinions as to the definition of the "highest good," or "final end," all differing more or less from one another.

Thus ended Pagan philosophy, after a course of 4000 years, in a total bankruptcy of truth. But we have no occasion in this matter to look back so far. Have the leading minds of our own day that have abandoned Christianity been more successful? Are they able to advance further than the heathen philosophers? Let us listen to one of the most famous among them. "Man's whole life," he says, "is the greatest madness. Did we but know why we are in the world? But this remains ever a riddle to the thinker, and he is still the happiest who is born a fool." And what, in his estimation, is God? None other than Nature herself, a mighty ever-working force, which is always creating, preserving, and destroying. It is what we call now electricity, now galvanism, magnetism, light, heat, or vital force, according to its different manifestations. Does not this sound like a voice from the depths of Paganism? Who would believe it to be that of Alexander von Humboldt, the most profound student of nature, the acknowledged chief among the *savans* of our own time?¹

3. Seeing that Peter was not called on to assume the office of governor or visible head of the Church until after Christ's ascension, we need not wonder that the question, which of them should be greater? should be repeatedly agitated among the apostles (Luke ix.

Answers to objections against the supremacy of Peter.

¹ See his Memoirs: Leipzig, Schäfer; also "Katholik," July 1863, p. 109.

46; xxii. 24); and it would be absurd to conclude from this that they did not therefore at a later period recognise Peter's supremacy. Much evidence to the contrary is indeed furnished in the Acts of the Apostles. No less absurd would it be to infer from the words of Christ—"He who is the greatest among you, let him be the least; and he that is the leader, as he that serveth" (Luke xxii. 26)—that our Lord has thus placed all the members of His Church on an equality with one another; has abolished the distinction between high and low, between rulers and subjects; has, in short, excluded from His kingdom a provision which in every human society is indispensably necessary. Had this been really His intention, why should He then have instructed His apostles in what manner they were to exercise their authority, and warned them as He did to imitate not those heathen kings, who ruled over their people in pride, and used them only for their own advantage, but on the contrary Himself, "The Son of Man, who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a redemption for many" (Matt. xx. 28)?

Did Jesus
receive the
blow on His
face in the
house of
Annas?

4. For the use of catechists, who have occasion to enlarge in detail on the passion of our Lord, we may observe here that according to some commentators, Annas, and according to others (and these the more numerous) Caiphas, was the high priest in whose presence our Lord's face was shamefully struck. If, with Allioli, we adopt the former opinion, then Peter's first denial must be placed in the house of Annas, and the two following ones in that of Caiphas. If the latter, we must, with Kistemaker, Reischl, and others, translate the text of the Vulgate "Et nūsit sum Annas legatū ad Caiphā pontificem" (John xviii. 24), by "Annas HAD sent Him bound to Caiphas the high priest." It was thus rendered, as Cornelius à Lapide observes, by the Arabians and Syrians. And similarly Allioli translates the following passage:—"Herodes tenuit Joannem et alligavit et posuit in carcerem," by, "Herod HAD seized John, and bound him, and thrown him into prison."

5. Renan, who, by his recent publication, the "Vie de Jésus," has made a name for himself among the foremost of the enemies of the Church, acknowledges that Jesus engrafted religion upon humanity, and established for ever the idea of a pure worship of God. However, whilst misleading the unwary reader by empty phraseology, and offering unhesitatingly for his acceptance a number of paradoxes as so many uncontroverted truths, he comes at last to the following negative result, which is as far opposed to reason and fact, as it is insulting to our Lord, and contrary to the spirit of the Gospel. "The religion," he says, "of which Jesus was the founder, was an *unconditional* religion, excluding nothing, and,

outside the domain of feeling, determining nothing. . . . We may search the Gospels in vain for a theological proposition. All formal creeds are defacements to the idea of Jesus." This sentence may suffice to give an idea of the frivolous and shallow nature of the work, which has won so much praise from the enemies of religion.

HISTORY AFTER CHRIST.

I.

FROM THE DEATH OF CHRIST TO THE CONVERSION OF CONSTANTINE.

SECTION XXVIII.

DESCENT OF THE HOLY GHOST—PREACHING OF THE PRINCE OF THE APOSTLES—CURE OF THE LAME MAN.

“After the ascension of our Lord, His disciples remained in Jerusalem, and persevered in prayer until the coming of the Holy Spirit, which they had been promised. On the tenth day, the Feast of Pentecost, a sudden noise was heard, as of a rushing wind, which filled the whole house in which they were assembled. Filled with the Holy Ghost, they all began to speak with different tongues, and to praise the Lord God. Peter, the chief of the apostles, stepped forth before the countless multitude of the Jews who were there assembled. He explained to them that the same Jesus, whom they had nailed to the cross, and who had risen from the dead, was their Lord and Redeemer, and urged them to believe in Him. His words were so blessed by the Holy Spirit, that three thousand men were baptized at once.”

It had been decreed by the Divine will, and foretold by the prophets, that the kingdom of the Messiah was to reach from shore to shore, even to the ends of the earth, and that the whole earth was to be filled with His glory. To accomplish this the face of the world must be changed, man be born again in the spirit, and the world newly created. The dark night of Paganism must pass away; instead of confusion and corruption, a new world must arise, shining with supernatural beauty, and adorned and enriched with all the treasures of

the Holy Spirit. This new creation, like the first, could only be effected by divine power. Of the first creation it is said, "The earth was void and empty, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God moved over the face of the waters" (Gen. i. 2). Through the operation of the Divine Spirit alone, could this dark and lifeless mass receive light and life. In this spiritual creation also, the Holy Ghost was to come and renew the face of the earth. The weak and ignorant apostles were to be the first to receive His gifts, in order that they might become effective instruments in the hand of the Almighty, for the completion of their wonderful work. Christ had foretold this to them, and a short while before His ascension had commanded them to remain in Jerusalem until the Holy Ghost, whom He would send from the Father, should come down upon them;—until they were "endued with power from on high" (Luke xxiv. 49). Obedient to the Lord's command, the apostles, on their return from the Mount of Olives, with Mary, the mother of Jesus, the holy women who had followed Him during His mortal life, and many other of His disciples,—in all about one hundred and twenty persons, assembled themselves together in a room, where, retired from the world and persevering with one mind in prayer, they prepared themselves, with devout longing, for the reception of the heavenly gift. (Acts i. 14, 15.) On the fiftieth day after the resurrection, and the tenth after the ascension, the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, descended upon them; and He did not enter their hearts noiselessly or unperceived; His coming was accompanied with signs and wonders, in order that the whole world might see, that the work undertaken by the apostles for the regeneration of mankind was inspired by God Himself. "When the days of Pentecost were accomplished," writes St. Luke (Acts ii. 1-5), . . . "suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty wind coming, and it filled the whole house" where the apostles were assembled. "And there appeared to them parted tongues, as it were of fire, and it sat upon every one of them: and they were all filled with the

Holy Ghost, and they began to speak with divers tongues according as the Holy Ghost gave them to speak.”¹

The Jewish Pentecost, the day commemorating the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, had drawn many Jews from all parts to Jerusalem. At the rumour of what had happened they hurried to the spot, and were amazed to hear each one his own tongue, whether Parthian, Mede, Elamite, Cappadocian, Cretan, Arabian, or Egyptian, as the untaught Galileans proclaimed the wonderful works of God. All asked in wonder what this could be. Some said, in mockery, that these men were drunk with wine. Peter, the head of the apostles, stood up boldly before the people, and declared to them that that same Jesus of Nazareth, who had wrought so many miracles and wonders in their midst, whom they had given up into the hands of impious men, and nailed to the cross, was gloriously risen from the dead, of which they were all witnesses. That, when He had entered into the kingdom of His glory, He had poured forth the Holy Spirit, as they then saw and heard, and as the prophet Joel had long ago foretold. He called upon all the house of Israel to “know most certainly” that this Jesus, whom they had nailed to the cross, was the anointed of God, the Lord, the long-expected Messias. These words made a profound impression. Deeply moved, the people asked, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” Peter said to them, “Do penance, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins: and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” And at once three thousand received holy baptism and were incorporated into the Church of Christ.

“Soon after, Peter went with John into the temple. A lame man sat at the door, asking for alms. Peter said to him, ‘In the name of Jesus, arise and walk!’ The lame man arose instantly, went into the temple, and praised God. On seeing this miracle, five thousand Jews asked for baptism.”

¹ For the explanation of this miracle, see vol. ii. p. 423. Compare also with the above p. 73 or 74.

The prince of the apostles soon had a new opportunity of glorifying Jesus, the crucified Saviour. As he was entering the temple with John, at the hour of prayer, a man who was lame from his mother's womb, asked him for alms. Peter replied, "Silver and gold I have none: but what I have, I give thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth arise and walk" (Acts iii. 6). And immediately the cripple, cured by a miraculous power, sprang up, and walked into the temple with the apostles, giving praise to the Most High. The people were seized with wonder and amazement at this great miracle, and Peter seeing this, addressed them, and exhorted them to give the glory to God. He told them again publicly, that in Jesus they had cast off and killed the Holy and the Just One, and the author of life, whom God had raised from the dead; and that this miraculous healing power did not emanate from the apostles themselves, but was wrought by faith in His name; and that now, therefore, they must do penance and be converted, that their sins might be blotted out. This discourse showed how powerfully the Holy Ghost operated in the weak apostles; for the eyes of five thousand Jews were opened, they confessed the salvation which had come to Israel, and asked for baptism.

SECTION XXIX.

FURTHER HISTORY OF THE APOSTLES—ANIMOSITY OF THE JEWS— SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY—CONVERSION OF SAUL.

"The apostles preached with great power the resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord, and wrought many signs and wonders. Their reputation became so great among the people, that the sick were carried out into the streets, that the shadow of Peter falling on them as he passed might heal them. The high priests and their followers were furious. They put the apostles into prison, scourged them, and forbade them to preach the name of Christ. They stirred up the people to stone St. Stephen to death, and did many other acts of violence. But no earthly power could set bounds to the spread of the doctrine of Jesus Christ. The apostles did not cease to preach the crucified Saviour both in the temple and in the houses, and the number of the baptized increased wonderfully from day to day."

A GLANCE at the history of the apostles is enough to convince us how great and mighty the Lord proved Himself in them. Who would recognise the timid fishermen of Galilee, who fled in terror at the capture of their Lord and Master,—and who, even after His resurrection, were in such fear of the Jews, that they only dared to meet with closed doors? Now, filled with the Holy Ghost, and burning with zeal, they are to be found in the court of the temple, in the synagogues, streets, and public places, preaching Jesus Christ crucified and risen again. Crowds collected to listen to them, and God gifted them with miraculous powers so extraordinary that nothing like them had ever been seen or heard of. It was owing to this that their words were received with such respect. The fame of their miracles spread far and wide, and the sick and those tormented by evil spirits were brought from all the surrounding cities to Jerusalem to be healed. The shadow even of Peter sufficed to heal all those on whom it fell. A holy fear came over the people at the sight of these wonders, and they praised and glorified the Lord, who had given such power to men; and the number of those who received baptism, and openly professed their faith in Jesus Christ, increased every day.

How wonderful are the ways of God! These things happened in that same city, where, so short a time before, thousands had joined in the cry, “Crucify Him, crucify Him!” The high priests and Pharisees, who had given up Jesus to a most shameful death, had now the mortification of seeing the number of His disciples increasing rapidly, and in finding themselves looked upon as the ruthless murderers of their God! But far from owning their crime, they did everything in their power to hinder the triumphant progress of Christianity. Directly after the cure of the man born lame, they commanded that Peter and John should be seized, brought before the council, and questioned. When asked by what power or in whose name they had done this, Peter replied, that the sick man standing before them was cured through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom they had crucified,

and whom God had raised from the dead. Filled with the Holy Ghost, he added, "This" (Jesus) "is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders: which is become the head of the corner: neither is there salvation in any other. For there is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts iv. 11, 12.) The council was confounded at the firmness and wisdom of the apostles, and being in fear of the people, was content to forbid them, under pain of severe punishment, to teach again in the name of Jesus. Peter and John replied boldly, "If it be just in the sight of God, to hear you rather than God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." And, as before, "with great power did the apostles give testimony of the resurrection of Jesus Christ." The high priests grew furious, and ordered them to be cast into prison, but an angel of the Lord set them free during the night, and led them forth to "speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." Whilst they were teaching in the temple on the following morning, they were again seized, and led before the enraged council, and were only saved from speedy death by the interposition of Gamaliel, a member of the high council, and much respected as a doctor of law. He represented to the judges that if this work were of men, it would infallibly come to nought; but if it were of God, they would strive in vain to overthrow it. The apostles were then scourged, and charged not to preach in the name of Jesus. And they "went joyfully forth from thence, because they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus;" and, notwithstanding all these threats, "they ceased not to teach daily in the temple, and to preach Jesus Christ." And the word of the Lord spread more and more under God's visible protection. The number of disciples in Jerusalem steadily increased, and even "a great number of the priests" embraced the Christian faith.

Among the disciples, whose success made them special objects of hatred to the Jews, was Stephen, one of the seven deacons appointed at Jerusalem, of whom the Holy Scripture

bears witness, that he was a "man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost," and one who did great signs and wonders before the people. The Jewish doctors who disputed with him "were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit that spoke" in him. They were angry, and stirred up the people against him. With a great tumult they dragged him before the council, where, upon the testimony of false witnesses, they accused him of blaspheming against Moses and against God. On hearing these false accusations the face of the holy confessor shone like that of an angel, and, raising his voice, he showed the Jews how ungrateful, faithless, and stiff-necked their fathers had always been towards God, in spite of His merciful dealings with them; how they had persecuted and slain the prophets, and how those there present had been the betrayers and murderers of Him of whom the prophets had spoken. Then, being filled with the Holy Ghost, he looked up to heaven, and said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God." At these words the rage of his enemies knew no bounds. They rushed upon him, cast him out of the city, and stoned him. Like a true disciple of Jesus, he cried with a loud voice, at the moment of death, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge!" and fell asleep, the first of the glorious martyrs of Christ.

At this time a fierce persecution arose against the faithful in Jerusalem. The high priests were unceasing in their endeavours to hinder the new teaching from taking root. But, by the grace of God, the means which they took to destroy it served only to spread it still farther. The Christians of Jerusalem, in consequence of this persecution, fled from the city, and taking refuge in the neighbourhood of Judea and Samaria, there fearlessly announced the Word of God, and baptized great numbers of men and women. When these tidings reached the apostles who had remained behind, Peter and John went to confirm the newly-baptized converts, in virtue of their episcopal powers, by the laying on of hands.

“Even Saul, afterwards called Paul, the fiercest enemy and persecutor of the Christians, became, by God’s grace, an apostle of the Lord, and the most zealous preacher of the Gospel.”

During the persecution in Jerusalem mentioned above, one man made himself especially remarkable for his burning zeal and unceasing activity against the Christians. This was Saul, a young Pharisee, from Tarsus, in Cilicia, who had studied the law at the feet of Gamaliel. He had taken part in the stoning of St. Stephen, by keeping guard over the clothes of those who stoned him. Not content with persecuting the faithful in Jerusalem, by dragging men and women out of their houses and casting them into prison, he went, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter, to ask powers from the high priest to bring back the disciples of the Lord prisoners from Damascus, where they had taken refuge. Burning with rage against them he set forth, but, as he was approaching Damascus, “suddenly a light from heaven shined round about him, and he was struck blind, and fell to the ground, and he heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” He said, “Who art Thou, Lord?” and the voice answered, “I am Jesus, whom thou dost persecute. It is hard for thee to kick against the goad.” Trembling and astonished, he asked, “Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?” He was told to go into the city, and that there he should be told what he must do. He arose, seeing nothing, and was led by the hand into Damascus by his companions, who had heard with consternation the mysterious voice. He there continued for three days, without food or drink, in fervent prayer. Meanwhile the Lord appeared to Ananias, a pious disciple, and commanded him to go to Saul, for that “this man is a vessel of election to Me, to carry My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel” (Acts ix. 15). Ananias went to Saul, laid his hands on him, and said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus hath sent me (He that appeared to thee in the way as thou camest), that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.” Immediately there fell

from his eyes as it were scales, and he received his sight, and rising up, was baptized. Immediately he went into the synagogues to preach, and, to the great astonishment of the Jews, he, the great persecutor of the Christians, was now heard teaching that Jesus was the Son of God, and the long-promised Messias. They could not understand this sudden change, and were struck dumb with confusion as they listened to his fiery eloquence. He showed such power in the fulfilling his high vocation, and so numerous and brilliant were his victories over the enemies of Christianity, that he is named, with right, the "Apostle of the Gentiles."

SECTION XXX.

THE FIRST CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IN JERUSALEM—ITS USAGES AND DISCIPLINE.

"The first Christian community, or 'Church,' consisted of the newly-converted Christians of Jerusalem and its neighbourhood. Their lives were pure and blameless, and they served God with joy and simplicity of heart. All lived in the greatest union, and were of one heart and one soul. No needy person was found among them, because the richer willingly sold houses and lands and all that they could spare, and laid the price at the feet of the apostles, to be distributed by them to those in want."

THE kingdom of God on earth was founded by our Divine Saviour Himself, and previous to His ascension the Christian Church already existed complete in outline; but the faithful were still scattered throughout Judea, and not yet formed into a separate community distinct from the Jews. On the day of Pentecost, however, the Church solemnly and openly started into visible life. From that day forth, the new converts of Jerusalem, to which those of the surrounding country joined themselves, formed one single community of believers, who were most closely united among themselves, not merely by the invisible bonds of Christian charity, but who all openly confessed the same faith, joined in the same worship, and listened to the same doctrine; who all assisted

at the Holy Sacrifice, received the Sacraments, and were all led and guided, invisibly by the Holy Spirit, and visibly by the apostles and by St. Peter, their common head. They still continued to frequent the temple, for the old law was but gradually to be superseded by the new. But they met together also in private houses, and there, because there were then no other churches, they assisted at the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice, and received the Lord's body. This we learn from the Acts of the Apostles, which testify of the faithful, that they persevered "in the doctrine of the apostles, and in the commemoration of the breaking of bread, and in prayers;" and again, that they continued "daily with one accord in the temple, and in breaking bread from house to house." The spirit of our Lord's teaching unfolded itself in singular beauty and perfection among the Christians at Jerusalem. And indeed it was most fitting that by this first Christian community a perfect example should be given, and that it should thus present a true image of that "new and heavenly Jerusalem, which is the mother of us all." The fire of divine love, which the Holy Ghost had kindled in their hearts, wrought among those children of Abraham, who then as now were used to cling so closely to earthly goods, a most entire detachment, so that freely and without constraint they renounced all claim to their temporal possessions. "As many as were owners of lands or houses sold them, and brought the price of the things they sold, and laid it down before the feet of the apostles. And distribution was made to every man according as they had need. Christ's *counsel* alone was sufficient to determine them to act in this manner, for such renunciation belonged to the *perfection* of the Christian life, as did also the state of virginity, which many of the faithful voluntarily embraced, notwithstanding that marriage was permitted to them. Such, however, as made over their goods to the Church, were obliged to do so with perfect honesty. A certain man named Ananias and his wife, who secretly kept back part of the price of their goods, and brought the rest, as if it were the whole, to the apostles, were punished by

God with sudden death, because, as St. Peter said, it was not to him, a mere man, that they had lied, but to God Himself, in His representatives.

"The multitude of believers," says the Holy Scripture, in another place, "had but one heart and one soul." How happy indeed must have been the lives of those for whom the chief cause of strife and bitterness no longer existed? Penetrated with the spirit of our Lord's great command, and knowing that it was by this love and union that they were to be known for His disciples, they regarded each other as brothers in the Lord, and as members of one body, Christ Jesus. Thus it was that they so willingly divided their own goods for the support of those in need, thus doing away as far as possible with the difference between rich and poor, and with the evils which attend the existence of great wealth on the one hand, and extreme want on the other. It is especially to be noticed that this division was effected by love only, and not by force or spoliation, the means advocated by the philanthropists of our own day. This mutual love was nourished and strengthened by the daily reception of the blessed Eucharist, wherein each was most closely united with the source of charity, and also through the love-feasts, or *Agapæ*, which they were used to celebrate after the divine offices. At these truly Christian feasts the rich were not too proud to sit down beside the poor. All "took meat with gladness and simplicity of heart." And if true spiritual joy is given to souls that are pure and pleasing in God's sight, we need not wonder that the believers, who walked in the love and fear of God, should experience that peace of God which passeth all understanding, and filled with that joy which is the consequence of divine love, should praise God and have favour with all the people who remained uninfluenced by the high priests.

"The apostles were, by Christ's ordinance, the superiors of the faithful. They taught, baptized, and administered the other Sacraments, guided the affairs of the Church, and ruled over the community."

Though the Church, according to Christ's ordinance, was a visible kingdom, and as such, ruled and guided by the human

representatives of its Divine Founder, still, being as it was, a spiritual kingdom, the jurisdiction over it given by our Lord to St. Peter was not a worldly, but an exclusively spiritual, jurisdiction. Thus at that same moment when the Church assumed a visible form, the apostles appeared as its rulers. Without waiting for any further authority than what they had already received, they began on the day of Pentecost to teach and to receive new members into their fold by baptism. We find them, and them only, prescribing the appointment of deacons, laying hands upon them, and conferring the Sacraments of orders and confirmation. And so it has remained ever since. In the Acts of the Apostles, written by St. Luke, and in all their own Epistles, they appear as the teachers and rulers of the new converts. It was they who gave orders, made laws, instituted ceremonies, and reformed abuses. We find them menacing the stubborn and unruly, passing sentence on offenders, punishing them by expulsion from the community, and receiving back the penitent. (On this head, see vol. ii. p. 460.) Does not the fact alone, that all who sold their goods laid the price at the feet of the apostles, plainly show us that the whole Christian community recognised and honoured them as its chiefs? And as the other apostles exercised their ruling office, so likewise did St. Peter exercise his own special office as head over the whole Church. (See vol. ii. p. 474.) And as the faithful honoured all the apostles as being those to whom our Lord had said, "As the Father hath sent Me, so I also send you," so, too, in St. Peter did they reverence the bearer of the keys of heaven, and the chief shepherd of the whole flock of Christ. Paul, even although he had received the Gospel and his apostolate immediately from Christ, went to Jerusalem in order to see Peter, and in him, as the Fathers tell us, "to honour the first and the chief of the apostles on whom the Saviour has laid the care of all the Churches." Holy Scripture gives clear proof of the love and honour in which Peter was held by all the faithful (Acts xii. 3-17). A persecution had been stirred up by Herod Agrippa against the Christians, to please the Jews,

and the apostle St. James, the son of Zebedee and brother of the evangelist St. John, had already fallen a victim. Herod then caused St. Peter also to be cast into prison and closely guarded. In this calamity, we are told, "prayer was made without ceasing by the Church to God for him." And not in vain. The very night before judgment was to have been passed on him, his dungeon was suddenly filled with heavenly light. An angel of the Lord stood before him, and awoke him, and bade him follow him. And, behold! the chains fell from his hands; they passed unperceived between the doubled guards; the iron gate leading into the city opened to them of itself, and then the angel suddenly vanished. Peter knocked at the door of a house where many of the faithful were assembled in prayer, and desired admission. The maid who heard him, knowing his voice, forgot in her joy to open the door, and ran to tell of his arrival. Then after the door had been opened, and the astonished brethren had assured themselves of the reality of their happiness, Peter related to the rejoicing Christians the great miracle which God had wrought in his behalf.

SECTION XXXI.

OBSTINACY AND PUNISHMENT OF THE JEWS—FIRST CONVERSION OF THE HEATHEN—COUNCIL OF JERUSALEM—SUCCESS OF THE APOSTLES AMONG THE HEATHEN—THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN APOSTOLIC TIMES—PETER, BISHOP OF ROME, AND HIS SUCCESSORS.

"Many of the Jews, it is true, accepted the teaching of Christ, but the greater number remained hardened. Therefore God allowed the threatened punishment to fall upon them. In the seventieth year after the birth of Christ, Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, and the temple burned. One million one hundred thousand Jews perished, and those who remained were driven from their country, and scattered over the whole earth, as living witnesses of Divine vengeance."

WHILST Christ's Church, the new kingdom of the Messias, was growing and strengthening, the Jews were advancing with rapid strides towards their own destruction. The natural

heirs of the promises, they had rejected in their blindness Jesus Christ, the true Messiah. His solemn and tender warnings had fallen on deaf ears, and His many and great miracles had failed to make them bend their pride beneath God's yoke ; but few comparatively, had their eyes opened by the preaching and miracles of the apostles to perceive the way of salvation, and in the thirty-three years which the mercy of God allowed to pass before the outbreak of the frightful Roman war, they did but add sin to sin. The time however was soon to come, in which they should feel the overpowering weight of that guilt with which they had loaded themselves when they slew their God. The judgments which Moses had threatened, which the prophets had foretold, and of whose coming Christ Himself, with tears of compassion, had warned them, fell at last with crushing violence on the miserable people. All the circumstances attending the destruction of Jerusalem bore witness that it was God Himself who punished in His justice, and who thus proclaimed to men of all times and nations, that it was an unequalled crime which had drawn down on its perpetrators a visitation, the like of which has never been known in the history of the human race.

The threatening signs and presages of evil, by which God manifested His just anger against His faithless people, to the terror of all the dwellers in Jerusalem for years before its destruction, are recorded by both Jewish and heathen historians. For seven years and five months, one Jesus, the son of Ananus, foretold the impending doom. After they had rejected Jesus, the only-begotten of the Father, who came for their redemption and salvation, another Jesus was sent to them, to foretell their reprobation and destruction. Suddenly, during the Feast of Tabernacles, he raised his voice, and uttered the lamentable cry, "A voice from the east ! A voice from the west ! A voice from the four winds ! A voice against Jerusalem and the temple ! A voice against the bridegroom and the bride ! A voice against the people !" Thus he cried day and night. Ever repeating the same words, he wandered up and down through the streets of Jerusalem, seeming never to weary or grow hoarse. To be rid of this messenger of evil, the people seized him and scourged him almost to the bone, but he gave no sign of pain. At each blow he did but cry the louder, "Woe ! woe to Jerusalem !" On feast-days his voice sounded yet more melancholy and

impressive. He exchanged words with no one. One day, during the siege, he was on the ramparts, crying with more than his usual vehemence, when suddenly he added, "Woe to me also!" and at that moment he fell, wounded by a stone from the enemy, to the ground, and was dashed to pieces, and thus ended his sad life. Strange things happened in the temple itself, so much so that a celebrated rabbin exclaimed one day, "O Temple, Temple! what ails thee, and why art thou afraid before thyself?" A strong brazen door, which closed the inner temple on the eastern side, and which could hardly be moved by twenty men, opened suddenly of itself about midnight. When, at the Feast of Pentecost, the priests entered this inner temple by night, to perform the duties of their office, they heard first a noise and movement, and then voices, as of a great multitude, which said, "Let us go forth from hence!" On the 21st of May, A.D. 65, before sunset, chariots and armies were seen throughout the whole country high in the air, and appearing to surround the city. But the people remained obdurate in spite of every warning. Many even, misled by impostors, held such portents to be omens of good to come. "Supernaturally deafened," writes the Jewish historian, Flavius Josephus, "in senseless blindness, they left those divine warnings unheeded which foretold the coming destruction."

The hatred with which the Jews had always regarded the Roman rule was still more embittered by the tyranny of the last governor, and in the year 66 A.D. the common discontent broke forth into open rebellion. The people formed themselves into undisciplined bands, drove the Romans out of Jerusalem, set fire to many public buildings, and forced a Roman army to a disgraceful flight. The rebels exulted in their victory, but the wiser trembled for the vengeance which must follow from the proud and powerful rulers of the world. Many of the chief Jews sought to flee from Jerusalem, as from a sinking ship. The Christians, mindful of the warning of their divine Lord, hastened to the city of Pella.

As soon as the Emperor Nero heard what had happened, he sent Vespasian, his bravest general, with an army of picked men to put down the revolt by force. But whilst the hostile troops wasted the country with fire and sword, a civil strife, not less destructive, raged within the distracted city of Jerusalem. Thieves and murderers from all parts had congregated within the town, and, making common cause with the worst of the rebels, had for many years before the siege made it acquainted with all the horrors of civil war. Eleazar, the captain of the temple, had surrounded himself with a body of desperate men, who named themselves zealots, and ruled Jerusalem with merciless tyranny. Once, to reinforce his party, he called in the assistance of the cruel Idumaans, and, by their help, deluged the city with blood. Twelve thousand of the

chief men were slain. Jerusalem was torn in pieces by three furious and bloodthirsty factions, who strove with each other for the mastery, and who, during this reign of terror, rushed murdering and pillaging through the streets. None dared to bewail or bury the dead. Whoever should dig a grave for one of his kindred who had been killed by the tyrant's faction, would at the same time be digging his own.

Vespasian, in the meanwhile, was called to the imperial throne in Rome, and his son, Titus, returned with the legions, and encamped before the unhappy city. It was the Easter of the year 70 A.D., and numberless Jews had flocked to Jerusalem from all countries. They saw with terror the preparations for the siege, and many turned and fled into the Roman camp. Even this mode of escape was fraught with much danger, for the zealots closely guarded all the walls and gates, and condemned every fugitive they caught to death, unless he should pay a heavy ransom. The city echoed day and night with the din of war and the wailing of distress. The abundant stores of provision which had been accumulated during many years for the support of the inhabitants, were blindly destroyed by one faction, lest they should be seized by the rest, and soon famine was added to the other horrors. The rich were giving all their substance for a measure of wheat, and the poor for a measure of barley. The tyrants, who yet rioted in abundance, forced their goods by torture from the unhappy citizens. They looked coldly on whilst women and children perished with want,—nay, they even tore from the famishing people those wild herbs and roots which they collected by night in the fields and gardens outside the city walls. So frequent indeed did such nightly sallies become, that the Romans, suspecting a stratagem, fell on the defenceless people, and scourged and crucified them as prisoners of war. A whole forest of crosses soon arose beside the Roman camp.

But all these horrible sufferings were insufficient to induce the despots who ruled in Jerusalem to accept the pardon repeatedly offered by Titus on condition of surrender. The Romans, therefore, at last took extreme measures. They built a strong wall round the city, with thirteen towers, and thus cut off all means of obtaining food. The most fearful hunger now raged. The inhabitants fell dead by thousands. The flat roofs of the houses, the inner chambers, the streets and public places were strewn with corpses. Men and boys crept about like shadows; if they stumbled they fell from sheer weakness, and were unable to rise again. Leathern girdles, shoe-strings, and rotten hay were used for food. In this extremity of misery, mothers even forgot their love for their offspring. Madened by hunger, a woman killed her child, roasted it, and ate

part. At the smell of food robbers rushed in, and demanded that it should be given them. With the calmness of insanity, the woman reached them what was left, and encouraged them to eat it. It was her child, she said. She had also eaten of it. The ruffians ran horrified from the house, to relate the hideous tale. None thought now of burying his people, for the city had long been but one huge grave. The dying laid themselves beside the dead, and so awaited their end. In large deserted buildings bodies were piled up in heaps, and more than six hundred thousand were thrown over the wall into the deep ditches outside. When Titus passed by one of these chasms filled with rotting corpses, he raised his hands to heaven, and declared before God that he was innocent of this guilt.

The burning heat of summer, and the pestilence of corruption, brooded over the city. The stillness of death reigned within it, broken only by the noise made by the bands of robbers, as they forced their way into houses, stripped and mutilated the dead, and mocked the dying.

On the 11th of July the daily sacrifice ceased to be offered because no lambs were to be had, and the grief and despair of the people were heartrending. When the news reached him, Titus once more sent Flavius Josephus to offer peace and pardon. With bitter tears he told his countrymen that both heaven and earth had conspired against them, and that resistance would bring on them certain destruction. "Save the holy city," he said, deeply moved; "save yourselves; save this temple, the wonder of the world, which the Romans respect, and Titus would unwillingly destroy." But his words were wasted.

The Romans returned with redoubled force to the attack;—huge battering-rams were brought to bear upon the walls; the besieged showed the courage of desperation, but their strength was becoming exhausted, and one bulwark after another fell into the hands of the Romans. The temple, now the scene of the struggle, was surrounded by heaps of ruins. Titus desired to save it at all costs, for all the wealth and splendour of the rest of Jerusalem was as nothing compared with its magnificence. But his precautions were frustrated by the obstinacy of the Jews. They fell back into the splendid pillared court which surrounded the temple, and defended themselves with desperate courage. Every foot of ground which the Romans gained was piled with dead bodies. At last a Roman soldier, forgetting the strict command of Titus, that the temple should be saved, flung a lighted torch into the chamber which led to the sanctuary. The cedar-wood wainscot was directly in a blaze, and a loud cry of horror arose from the Jews. In vain Titus hastened to the spot, and gave

orders for the fire to be extinguished. A mortal struggle was going on in the holy place. The dead lay in heaps about the altar of holocausts, and blood flowed in streams over the pavement. But even yet the deluded people fancied that the day was come when they were to ascend the throne of universal dominion. There was no quarter given, the defenders were cut down in all directions by the infuriated Romans; and on the same day and month as that on which Solomon's temple had been destroyed by Nabuchodonosor, the second temple and the city perished in the flames. Immense treasures were seized as spoils, and the victorious legions planted their eagles upon the heaps of ruins. Struck by the great strength of the walls and towers, Titus exclaimed, on beholding them, "It is God who has gained the battle for us, men's hands could have availed nothing against such a fortress." And he refused to accept the mural crowns which were sent him by many nations, saying that it was not he, but that God, whom the Jews had offended, who was the victor. Of the ninety-seven thousand Jews yet remaining, many were sold as slaves, and others reserved for the amphitheatres. The number of Jews who fell altogether by the sword and by famine during the siege, is said to have been one million one hundred thousand. A few towers alone remained standing after the destruction of the city and ramparts, as memorials of the great siege. Seven hundred of the finest of the young men were chosen by Titus, from among the prisoners, to adorn his triumph in Rome.

"It was because of the obstinacy of the Jews, and more immediately in consequence of a direct charge from God, that the apostles addressed themselves to the Gentiles."

Those believers who were chosen by God to be the first members of His Church, being Jews by birth, and shunning as they did all contact with the heathen, whom they held to be unclean, refrained at first from preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles. But by the time when Jerusalem had atoned for her guilt by her total destruction, numbers of heathens had entered the Church, and many communities of Gentile Christians flourished. This change was brought about by a charge from God. To St. Peter, as head of the Church, a mysterious vision was vouchsafed. Whilst he was at Joppe, engaged in prayer, it was made known to him, that it was for Jews and Gentiles alike, that the benefits of salvation were designed. Directed by the Holy Ghost, the prince of the apostles went to Cesarea (on the sea-coast), and there in-

structed the heathen centurion Cornelius, who had found grace with God, together with his friends and kindred, in the mysteries of the Christian faith. Whilst he was speaking to them, suddenly, to the astonishment of the Jewish Christians present, the Holy Ghost descended upon them, and they began to speak with tongues, and to magnify God. Seeing clearly the will of God, Peter no longer hesitated to give baptism to the Gentiles who had been thus favoured. The wall which separated the Jewish from the heathen world, was thus broken down, and the long line begun, of martyrs, confessors, and virgins, who, springing from a Pagan soil, became the pride and glory of the Church. But while the Gentiles hastened to avail themselves of the grace offered them by God, the Jews hardened their hearts more and more, and busied themselves everywhere in stirring up hatred and persecution against the Christians. Paul and Barnabas, filled with holy anger, thus addressed the Jews of Pisidia: "To you it behoved us first to speak the Word of God; but because you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles." (Acts xiii. 46.) But the Gentiles were filled with great joy, "and the Word of the Lord was published throughout the whole country." The preaching of the apostles was especially fruitful in Antioch; there, a great multitude were converted, so that it was at Antioch that the disciples were first named Christians.

About this time (between A.D. 50 and 52), the growing Church appeared threatened with a dangerous schism. The occasion of strife was the demand made by some of the believing Jews, that the rite of circumcision should be imposed on the Gentile converts, as being necessary to salvation. This was strenuously opposed by Paul and Barnabas, and that the question might be definitely settled, it was determined that it should be referred to the assembly of the apostles and elders at Jerusalem. The matter was considered under the presidency of St. Peter, and he, as head of the Church, rejected the proposal of the Jewish Christians. This

decision was submitted to by all, and it was unanimously determined to make known to their Gentile brethren that "it had seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to them" that no further burden should be laid upon them; and with regard to the Mosaic law, they were directed merely to observe certain points, which were judged temporarily expedient. (Acts xv.) In this manner the dispute was settled, and an example is thus furnished for the guidance of Christians of all succeeding times, as to how they should bear themselves with regard to such questions as may arise in matters of faith and morals. It is on the pattern of this first assembly at Jerusalem that all those councils of the Church, which circumstances have since called forth, have been held.

"It was in poverty and persecution, and amidst numberless difficulties and dangers, that the apostles preached the Gospel. God visibly blessed their labours. Thirty years had hardly elapsed since the descent of the Holy Ghost, when in all parts of the world Christian communities were to be found."

With gentle but irresistible power the light of Christianity spread itself in ever-widening circles, and illuminated more and more brightly the gloomy face of the world. For, mindful of Christ's words, "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," the apostles dispersed themselves through those lands which were groaning beneath the tyrannous yoke of Satan, that they might confer upon them true spiritual freedom. In all places were heard the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. Soon, as St. Paul bears witness, were seen fulfilled those words of Holy Scripture, "Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the whole world" (Rom. x. 18). By St. Peter, Jesus Christ was made known in Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor, and Italy; St. Andrew, brother to the prince of the apostles, preached in Scythia, Epirus, and Greece; St. Philip in Phrygia; St. Bartholomew in Armenia and Arabia; the two St. James's in Palestine; St. Thomas pushed his way into Central Asia, and is said to have even reached India; St. Matthew and St. Matthias also

carried the light of faith into Asiatic Ethiopia; St. Simon of Cana laboured in Mesopotamia and Persia; St. Jude, called also Thaddeus, in Arabia, Mesopotamia, and Idumæa; St. John worked chiefly in Asia Minor, but the Parthians are also said to have received the Gospel from him. Never was mighty conqueror more eager for combat, or more certain of victory, than these poor and despised apostles, when dividing the world amongst them, they set forth from Judea, each for his divinely-appointed battlefield. Glowing with love for their Divine Lord, and filled with the Holy Ghost, they burned with desire to rescue immortal souls from everlasting destruction, and to see the Holy Trinity adored, and the name of Jesus honoured and glorious among men. Thus to them no distance was too great, no land too desert and barren, and no people too barbarous and degraded. They embraced all nations with the same heavenly charity. This charity it was that gave wings to their feet, that sweetened their pains and troubles, and that nerved and supported them in the dangers and difficulties by which they were everywhere threatened. Many and great indeed were the sufferings which the apostles willingly endured for the love of Christ. Hunger and thirst, heat and cold, weariness and exhaustion, were their lot. Satan, the enemy of all good, fiercely fanned the flame of persecution amongst both Jews and heathen, against the undaunted messengers of the Gospel. The seed was sowed in tears, that afterwards the full harvest might be reaped with joy. With the exception of St. John, who remained miraculously unhurt when plunged in a caldron of boiling oil, the whole number of the apostles suffered martyrdom.

History has preserved to us but little of the lives and labours of the apostles, but though their forms have vanished like torches from our gaze, we yet behold everywhere throughout the world the light which they have kindled. St. Luke, the faithful companion of St. Paul, has left us a glorious picture of the work of an apostle, when in the Acts of the Apostles he gives us an account of the wonderful ministry of the great doctor of the Gentiles. Chosen by the

Holy Ghost Himself for the great work of the conversion of the heathen, Paul began his unexampled course. Accompanied by the apostle St. Barnabas, and afterwards by Silas, Timothy, Titus, and Luke, he journeyed repeatedly through Palestine, Syria, the various provinces of Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Greece. Being seized when upon one of these missionary circuits, and imprisoned at Jerusalem, he appealed to the emperor, and thus was carried a prisoner for Christ's sake to Rome. With the same zeal and wonderful power he everywhere preached Christ crucified, a folly to the Gentiles and a scandal to the Jews. In spite of every hindrance, he founded, ordered, and governed churches in all parts. Christian communities seemed almost to spring forth at his tread. Spending his life in the service of his Redeemer, he feared neither the vengeance of the Jews nor the fury of the Gentiles. Far from desiring to please men, the only glory that he sought was in being like to Jesus crucified, and he bore in rich abundance shame, ill-treatment, and reproach. He himself relates with holy rejoicing (2 Cor. xi.) how his life had been passed "in labour and painfulness, in much watchings, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." How he had been in constant peril by water and by land, from Jews and from Gentiles, and how he had been imprisoned, scourged, and even stoned.

The most wonderful success crowned the labours of the apostles, for the Lord was with them. The name of Christ was glorified everywhere by the most astonishing cures, by the gifts of tongues and of prophecy, and by numberless other miracles. It is a remarkable circumstance that it was in the most populous and flourishing cities, such as Antioch, Cesarea, Damascus, Edessa, Corinth, Alexandria, Rome, and others, where luxury and immorality had attained their highest pitch, that the Christian communities were the largest and most promising. So fast did the Church in Rome increase, that we find Tacitus speaking of "the huge crowd" of Christians, who filled the city at the time of Nero's persecution, A.D. 66. The results of the preaching of the Gospel appear

yet more striking from the fact that not the poor and humble classes only, but the noble and learned also became its converts. Such were the chamberlain of the Ethiopian queen, who was baptized by Philip the deacon; Manahen, a foster-brother of King Herod; Sergius Paulus, the governor of Cyprus, (from the time of whose conversion St. Paul, formerly called Saul, apparently dates his change of name); the centurion Cornelius; again Dionysius, a member of the Council of the Areopagus at Athens; Crispus, ruler of the synagogue of Corinth (Acts xviii. 8), and Erastus, treasurer of that city (Rom. xvi. 23). Even a nephew of the Emperor Vespasian—the consul Flavius Clemens, with his wife Domitilla, became Christians, and were happy in exchanging the splendour and luxury of the imperial court for the poverty and retirement of the disciples of Jesus Christ.

“The apostles elected bishops to be the spiritual rulers of the Christian flock. They communicated to them their own powers with prayer and imposition of hands, and appointed them their successors and vicegerents. The different communities were all closely united, and, under the common headship of Peter, formed the one universal, that is to say, the Catholic, Church. Peter suffered martyrdom in Rome, of which he was bishop, during the last years of his life. It is from him that the Bishops of Rome, or Popes, inherit their supreme ecclesiastical jurisdiction.”

In a few years a Church grew up, which, by its wide extension and the number of its members, was signally marked out as a marvel of Divine power. But that the work so well begun by the apostles might be maintained and carried on, it was needful that men should be provided on whom the teaching, priestly, and pastoral offices, instituted by Christ in behalf of His Church, should devolve, these offices being designed, like the Church herself, to be extended and continued to the end of time. The apostolic power which, together with the commission to send others also, had been confided by Christ to His apostles, could devolve only upon those on whom the apostles should confer it by means of holy orders. Wherever, therefore, they founded Christian communities, they also appointed for them spiritual overseers,

or "bishops." These they consecrated by the imposition of hands, giving them power to rule and instruct their flocks, and to dispense to them the appointed means of grace. (Acts xiv. 22; 1 Tim. iv. 14.) Such bishops were regarded by the faithful as appointed by the Holy Ghost to rule the Church of God. (Acts xx. 28.) Paul thus ordained Timothy to be bishop of Ephesus, and Titus bishop of Crete; and Polycarp was made bishop of Smyrna by St. John. Priests and deacons also were ordained by the apostles to assist the bishops in the duties of their office. The bishops of such newly-founded sees were commissioned by the apostles to preach Christianity in the surrounding cities and country either in person or by means of their subordinates, to found new communities, and to create, when needed, new bishops and priests by means of holy orders (Titus i. 5). A natural dependence subsisted between such communities and their bishops, and the mother Churches founded by the apostles, the mother Church taking precedence before her daughters. Such were called after the Greek, "Metropolitan Churches," and their bishops received the titles of metropolitans or archbishops. In this way may be explained the origin of "bishoprics" and "archbishoprics." Amongst the metropolitan Churches, those which from apostolic times had the highest rank were Antioch, the first seat of St. Peter's episcopate; Alexandria, which had been established by his beloved disciple, the evangelist St. Mark; and, above all others, Rome, which was founded also by the prince of the apostles. The bishop of Antioch was Patriarch over the East, the bishop of Alexandria over all Egypt, and the bishop of Rome over the entire West. The bishops of the various Churches were thus not isolated from one another—being all in subjection to the bishops of the metropolitan Churches, and all continuing in the doctrines and precepts given to these mother Churches by the apostles.

In order that at no time the danger might arise of Christ's Church being divided by equally powerful factions, it was necessary that unity should be preserved also among the metropolitan sees themselves. To this end the whole

Church, bishops, archbishops, and patriarchs, was subjected to one common head, the vicegerent of Christ on earth, Peter, the prince of the apostles. "With the Roman Church," writes St. Irenæus, bishop and martyr, "founded by the apostles Peter and Paul, must the faithful, on account of her pre-eminent rank, be everywhere in accordance" (*Hæres.*, iii. 3). "For how," writes St. Cyprian (*Bk. v. d. Einheit*, "On Unity"), "can he who forsakes Rome, the chair of Peter, flatter himself with the hope that he is a member of the Church?" We thus see that from its origin, the Catholic Church had, according to the intention of her Divine Founder, taken the form of a well-governed kingdom, embracing all nations, and of a completely-organised whole—for whose perpetuity the wisest possible provision was made.

For many years Peter adorned the episcopal chair of Rome with the lustre of his virtues, and so fostered the young plant of Christianity, that not all the succeeding storms were able to uproot it. In the year A.D. 67, on the 29th of June, the venerable prince of the apostles gained the glory of martyrdom by the death of the cross. According to a pious tradition, he begged as a special favour he might be fastened to the cross with his head downwards, because he held himself to be unworthy of suffering death in the same manner as his Divine Master.¹ In the same year, and as it appears, on the same day, the great apostle of the Gentiles ended, also in Rome, his earthly course. He was beheaded, as being a Roman citizen; and even to the present day shares in the Holy City, with St. Peter, the veneration of the whole Christian world. St. Peter was succeeded in the Roman see by Linus, after him by Cletus, and then by Clement,—all three of whom had been disciples of the prince of the apostles; after them came Evaristus, Alexander, Sixtus, and the remaining Popes in unbroken succession down to Pius the Ninth, the two hundred and fifty-eighth successor of St. Peter, who is now so

¹ Concerning St. Peter's death in Rome, as an authentic fact of history, see Niehues, "*Kaiserthum und Papsthum*," vol. i., Introduction, chap. v.

gloriously reigning in the midst of many sufferings. The Popes in succeeding to the apostolic see, succeeded likewise to all the rights and dignities with which Peter, its first occupant, had been invested; and were endowed, like him, with supremacy over the whole Church. For the privileges of Peter, granted to him as they were for the preservation of the unity and peace of the Church, would therefore not expire with him, but be continued to his successors, and, like all those powers bestowed by Christ for the good of His Church, endure from generation to generation until the end of time.

SECTION XXXII.

CAUSE OF THE UNIVERSAL PERSECUTION OF THE CHRISTIANS BY THE
HEATHEN—PERSECUTION IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE, ESPECIALLY IN
ROME—THE CATACOMBS.

“The heathen regarded with dismay the rapid spread of the Christian religion, by which their vicious lives and degrading idolatry were so loudly condemned. They resolved that Christianity should be rooted out.”

THE success which had hitherto attended the preaching of the apostles, made it impossible not to foresee that the Christian doctrine must one day become the religion of the world. The victory, however, was not to be won without a long and painful struggle. So long as the human race is divided between the children of God and children of this world—the children, that is to say, of the reprobate world, of which our Lord on the eve of His passion spoke, when He said, “the prince of this world is already judged”—so long will the former be attacked and persecuted by the latter. This was foretold by Christ to His disciples: “Behold I send you,” He said, “as lambs among wolves.” The cause also of the hatred that the world would bear to them, He showed them in these words, “If you had been of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, . . . therefore the world hateth you” (John xv. 19).

The pure and blameless conduct of the Christians, calculated though it was to inspire even the blinded heathen with respect, could not long escape the ordinary fate of virtue in this world, but excited among the corrupt and degraded people, envy, hatred, and fierce persecution. The Pagans beheld in every Christian a troublesome censor, by whose shining example of virtue their own avarice, pride, lust, and cruelty were perpetually branded and condemned. They desired to be rid of such, at all costs. In the absence of any real cause of accusation the most scandalous calumnies were invented, in order to draw on the Christians the public hatred and contempt. Circumstances made it necessary that the assemblies of the faithful for divine worship, and for the reception of the blessed Eucharist, should be held secretly, and often by night. These meetings were represented as being stained by every kind of abomination. Ghastly feasts were said to take place in them, at which innocent children were killed and devoured. There was no crime which was not attributed to the Christians. It was said that they were men who had solemnly abjured all obligations, both towards God and man. It is, then, easy to understand how an ignorant mob would be ready to vent their rage against the Christians in any national calamity that might occur. Was the country invaded by barbarians, or attacked by famine or pestilence; were towns laid waste by floods, volcanoes, or earthquakes, the populace would break out into imprecations against the Christians, whose impiety, they supposed, had occasioned these calamities, and demand with fury that the wretches should be cast to the lions. The heathen priests too, the soothsayers, magicians, and jugglers, who saw their position and their gains in danger, did everything in their power to fan the flame of popular hatred.

Those also who were in power among the heathen, especially the Roman emperors themselves, found many reasons for entering on a mortal strife with Christianity. The Roman state was bound up in the closest manner with idolatry, and was even itself raised to divine honours, whilst the Christian teaching was, on the contrary, in the most direct opposition to polytheism. Those exalted beings, before whom the heathen would prostrate themselves in the dust, to whom they raised splendid temples, and offered sacrifices, were to the Christians but idle dreams. Everything relating to Pagan worship was an abomination to them. Every public relationship of life, was however intimately penetrated with heathen manners and practices. Public business, even private business of importance, was transacted amid heathen ceremonies. Feasts, civic and domestic, were accompanied by sacrifices and invocation of the gods. Civil and military oaths were to be taken in the name of a heathen divinity. The consequence of this was, that Christians were con-

tinually obliged to withdraw themselves from public and private affairs, in order that they might not act against their consciences, and might without offence pursue their new calling. Thence arose the universal reproach, levelled at them by the heathen, that they were haters of mankind, contemners of the state, and enemies to the emperors. An accusation such as this weighed heavily in their disfavour. Not only was the pride of the Roman emperors too great to suffer opposition, however just; not only did they desire unlimited sway over the whole world, but their personal dignity was in another way wounded. The supreme secular and sacerdotal offices were united in the person of the emperor. It fell to him to provide for the splendour of the feasts, the adornment of the temples, and the fitting worship of the gods; and he could besides flatter himself with the hope, that he too, by a decree of the Senate, would after death be enrolled among the presiding deities, and his memory preserved and made glorious by temples and altars. Indeed many emperors had, even during life, enjoyed divine honours. All such ambitions, however, would be destroyed should Christianity ever gain common acceptance. We can thus understand the bitterness and violence with which heathen rulers would enter the lists against a teaching so hostile to them. And the struggle was fiercer in proportion as an emperor felt himself bound to stem the tide of dissolution and ruin threatening the state, and believed that the way to do so was to uphold intact the ancient worship of the gods.

The relative positions of Christianity and Paganism made war between them inevitable. The horrible ferocity with which the strife was attended is but an additional proof of how far the human mind may be misled when under the dominion of Satan.¹

“The Christian believers were forced either to abjure their faith, or to die in horrible torments. They were scourged, rent in pieces, thrown to wild beasts, burnt with torches, or torn with iron hooks. Some were boiled in oil, mutilated, sawn in pieces, or crucified, while others were covered with pitch and set on fire, to serve as torches for the nightly games. Everywhere the Christians endured indescribable torments. The whole earth was watered with their blood. Thousands and thousands of every age, sex, and condition ended their lives in unheard-of tortures.”

¹ The first Christians, as the acts of the martyrs testify, held that the chief cause of the cruel and obstinate persecution they underwent was the fierce hatred of Satan, who saw in the abolition of idolatry the fall of his power, and the termination of his reign over the world. This ought not to surprise us any more than the teaching of holy Scripture, that Satan, “the god of this world, hath blinded the minds of unbelievers, that the light of the Gospel . . . should not shine unto them” (2 Cor. iv. 4).

The Christians of Rome were destined by God to bear the first brunt of heathen malice. Nero was the first of the series of persecuting emperors. The world had already been astonished and terrified at his crimes. This tyrant, whose hands were already stained with the blood of his mother, his brother, and his wife, whose shameful excesses had disgraced humanity, and who acknowledged no law but that of his own wild caprice, in the year A.D. 64 set fire to Rome at its four corners, in order that he might enjoy the representation of the burning of Troy. He forbade that any attempt should be made to extinguish the fire, and the huge city was therefore soon rapt in flames. When the conflagration was at its height, its author appeared on a tower of his palace in the garb of a lute-player, and sung the burning of Troy. In six days almost the whole of Rome was reduced to ashes or lay in ruins, and its wretched inhabitants were muttering curses against the imperial tyrant. The latter, to avoid an insurrection, sought to screen himself by a new crime; he accused the hated Christians of having caused the fire, and immediately took measures, having for their avowed object the avenging of the injury done to the people. By his orders the Christians were diligently sought out, imprisoned in immense numbers, and all sentenced to death. All the horrible cruelty of his nature was manifested in the execution of the sentence. Many of the victims died on the cross; some were covered with skins of beasts, and torn to pieces by dogs that were set upon them; whilst others again were bound in rows to posts in his pleasure garden, wrapt in cloths which had been dipped in pitch, and set on fire at night. He caused public races to be held by the light of these human torches, and himself, habited as a charioteer, mingled with the gaping crowd. A few years later he redoubled his ferocity, giving orders that the Christians should be exterminated, like noxious vermin, from his dominions. And countless happy souls won at this time the palm of martyrdom.

The wretched death of Nero by his own hand put an end

to this time of trial, and God granted a peace of many years to His Church for the healing of those wounds which her enemies had inflicted. During this time the Christians, though still exposed to persecution on the part of the Jews and to the popular hatred, were allowed to remain unmolested by the government. Towards the end of the century the attempt, however, was renewed by the cruel Emperor Domitian, to stifle Christianity in the blood of its martyrs. The utmost severity was employed for this purpose. The emperor's own kinsman, Flavius Clemens, was executed, and his wife, Flavia Domitilla, sent into exile.

The limits of this work preclude our giving a detailed account of all the persecutions; and indeed it would be in vain to attempt to describe all the sufferings which Christians endured in different countries and from different tyrants. The deaths by which malefactors usually expiated their crimes, such as beheading, stoning, hanging, or crucifixion, seemed for the most part too lenient for Christians. Paganism exhausted its ingenuity in devising tortures by which believers in Jesus Christ should die, if they refused to sacrifice to the gods. At times they were scourged with whips or iron claws till bones and entrails protruded; their wounds were rubbed with salt and vinegar, their limbs were dislocated on the rack, they were stretched naked on sharp-pointed shells and pieces of broken glass. Some were burned with red-hot iron plates, some were laid on gridirons, or placed in iron chairs over slow fires. Others again were hung up by the feet, head downwards, over fires of damp wood, to be slowly stifled by the smoke; or suspended by the thumbs, with weights fastened to their feet. Many of the confessors were cast into boiling water, oil, or pitch; melted lead was poured over their backs; they were flung tied together, or else in sacks with poisonous serpents, into the sea. Some were dipped into honey, and laid, with their hands and feet bound, in the burning sun, to be devoured by worms and insects, and to rot while yet alive. Others were tied by the feet to large boughs of trees which

had been bent towards each other, and then fearfully lacerated in their recoil. Eyes and tongues were torn out, limbs wrenched off at the joints, till nothing but the head and trunk of the victims were left. Cruelty showed itself ever inventive in the application of new tortures. Reeds were driven under the martyrs' nails, and melted lead was poured into their wounds. There were others who were tied to horses, and dragged to death over thorns and stones. Innumerable multitudes perished from cold and hunger, at the stake, in prisons, and in deserts. The floor of the Roman amphitheatre was drenched with blood. Christians were thrown, amid the howls of the pitiless mob, to lions, tigers, elephants, and wild bulls, to be dragged, torn, and trampled on. (See vol. i. p. 166.) So fiercely did Christ's enemies carry on their work, that they burned without hesitation the city of Antandrus, in Phrygia, whose inhabitants, together with St. Adanctus the governor, had persevered in professing Christianity. The town was surrounded by an army, and fired on all sides, and rich and poor, men and women, old and young, perished together in the flames, and went to the possession of the eternal city of God, the heavenly Jerusalem. (Bolland, Febr., vol. ii. p. 14.)

The Acts of the martyrs witness abundantly to the wonderful patience, firmness, and joy with which they fought the good fight. "Who would not admire," writes a most trustworthy eyewitness, "the constancy of purpose, the perseverance, the divine love of those, who, when scourged till their veins were laid open, were enabled by their faith and courage to utter neither sigh nor complaint, whilst the very spectators, full of compassion, sorrowed for them? The fire they endured seemed to them cool, because their souls' eyes were opened to behold both the eternal fire which they thus shunned, and the glory and blessedness in store for those who continue to the end in the faith." Eusebius, also an eyewitness, says, in his history of the Church (viii. 9), that he had himself seen "the admirable zeal, the divine power, and cheerfulness of the faithful. They confessed the Son of God with joyful courage, heard themselves sentenced to die with smiles, and some to their very last breath sang psalms and hymns of praise." According to another testimony (Tertull., *Apolog.*): "Those who embrace Christianity know what is in store for them, and rejoice more when they are

condemned to death than when they are pardoned." "Thanks be to God! thanks be to God!" the holy confessors were often heard to exclaim on hearing their sentence of death. To die for Christ was their sole wish, the height of their desires. When Pope St. Sixtus was led out to martyrdom, Laurence, archdeacon of the Roman Church, followed him weeping, and saying, "Father, whither goest thou without thy son? Holy bishop, whither without thy deacon?" Nothing could console this loving servant of Christ but the assurance given him by the aged pontiff, that he too should follow within three days, and after yet greater sufferings; and with what heroic courage he fought his battle, we all know. Whilst Leonidas, father to the young Origen, lay bound in prison for Christ's sake, the boy's desire for a martyr's death became so uncontrollable, that his mother could scarcely hinder him by her entreaties from delivering himself up to the heathen judge. She was even forced to hide his clothes in order to prevent his leaving the house. With what ardour, too, did St. Ignatius, the aged Bishop of Antioch, long for the privilege of martyrdom! His one fear, when condemned by the Emperor Trajan to be cast to wild beasts in Rome, was lest the fervent prayers of the faithful should obtain his reprieve. "I beseech you," he wrote during his journey to the Christians at Rome, "that you show not an unseasonable goodwill towards me. Suffer me to be the food of beasts, for I am the wheat of Christ, and being ground by their teeth, shall be found God's pure bread. Pray to Christ for me, that by these instruments I may become a sacrifice to God. I long earnestly for the beasts that await me. I desire to find them fierce, and would provoke them to devour me quickly, so that that should not befall me which has befallen others, of whom the beasts were afraid, and left them untouched. Forgive me. I know what is for my good; now do I begin to be Christ's disciple. Come fire; come cross; come beasts without number; let my bones be crushed and my whole body rent; let all the torments of the devil be let loose upon me, so that only I become a partaker of Jesus Christ. Better it is for me that I should die for Jesus, than rule over the whole earth." On reaching Rome, he heard, as a message from Heaven, the command given that he should be cast immediately to the beasts. As he had desired, the lions threw themselves with such fury upon him, that but a few bones of his body were left remaining.

Christians of every rank, age, and sex were animated with the same heroic purpose. Those whom imperial favour had raised to the highest honours, old men bowed down with years, delicate women and feeble children, all went forth with unflinching joy to deaths the most painful and terrible. Sebastian was captain of the

imperial body-guard, and a favourite of the emperor. Maurice was leader of the Theban legion. Others, such as Peter, Dorotheus, and Gorgonius, were chamberlains of the emperors, beloved by their masters, residing amid all the luxuries of a court, and loaded with marks of imperial favour. But one and all proved themselves true disciples of Jesus Christ, and amidst every torture remained constant until death to their divine Lord. Simeon, Bishop of Jerusalem, and a kinsman of our Lord, was one hundred and twenty years old when he suffered martyrdom by crucifixion. By the same death the aged Theodulus, who had seen his descendants to the third generation, attained the crown of glory. And how many glorious examples are furnished to us by the weaker sex! Over and over again were the words of Lactantius proved true. "Not powerful men only, but children and women, have triumphed in silence over their torturers; even fire itself had no power to make them utter a cry." Blandina, who won her victory at Lyons, was a virgin so weak and tender by nature, that the faithful feared not a little for her constancy. But from morning until evening she endured every kind of torment. Her executioners, wearied out, were forced to acknowledge themselves vanquished, and marvelled that tortures, each one of which would have seemed sufficient to cause death, should be unable to quell her courage. The words "I am a Christian" ever gave fresh strength to the blessed martyr. She was at last thrown before a wild bull, who tossed her with his horns, gored her, and trampled her to death. Agnes, a child of thirteen, crowned her pure and innocent life with a martyr's death. The only daughter of rich and noble parents, she had early consecrated herself to be the bride of her Saviour. To remain true to this heavenly Bridegroom she feared not the revenge of her disappointed suitors. When accused of being a Christian, she boldly avowed her faith, and denounced fearlessly the folly of idolatry. She remained unmoved at the sight of the burning pile and the horrible instruments of torture. She heard her sentence to death with joy, went gladly to the place of execution, and received her deathblow with unflinching courage. The young Soteris, also a member of a noble Roman family, was beheaded at the same time. To break her resolution the judge had ordered that she should be struck on the face, and she immediately unveiled herself to receive the blows. She endured them calmly and tearlessly, and remained equally steadfast under all the tortures which followed. Who can read without wonder of the high courage of Eulalia, a girl of twelve years old, who suffered a glorious martyrdom at Merida in Spain? Her parents had sent her into the country that she might be safe from the fury of the Emperor Maximian; but she could not withstand the ardent longing which possessed her to suffer and die for Christ. She returned to Merida during the

night, went boldly before the judge and proclaimed herself a Christian. Wishing to spare her youth, he tried in vain to induce her by gentle means to sacrifice. Eulalia, to show her contempt for idols, pushed an image from the altar, and trampled it under foot. The executioners fell on her in anger, tore her sides with iron claws, and burned her wounds with torches. Quietly, without a sigh or tear, she endured her martyrdom, till she bowed her head and died. (For the heroic deaths of Cyrillus, a boy of twelve, and of two little boys of only three years old, see vol. i. pp. 193, 196, 197, or 194, 197, 198.)

Out of the multitude of brilliant examples preserved to us in the Acts of the martyrs and the accounts of early ecclesiastical historians, we have mentioned but a few. And how indescribably great is the number of those who fought God's battle bravely and faithfully, but whose triumphs have remained unrecorded by men, and whom we shall first behold at the day of judgment wearing their martyr's crowns! Victims innumerable fell before the imperial edicts in every corner of the huge Roman empire. Everywhere, both in the East and West, Christians were delivered into the power of their mortal enemies. A war of extermination was waged against them, and there was no land which was not the scene of the most hideous cruelties.

To mention but one instance among many. Eucherius, who in the fifth century was bishop of Lyons, speaks truly of its inhabitants as being actually "a city of martyrs." This town had undergone a fierce persecution under the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, and by the time St. Irenæus had gained over nearly all the inhabitants to Christianity, another and yet more violent one broke out under Septimus Severus; we are told by trustworthy witnesses that the streets literally streamed with blood. St. Irenæus himself was put to death, together with the greater part of his flock. An old inscription in the church of St. Irenæus in Lyons, states that the number of Christians who suffered at that time exceeded nineteen thousand. In Asia Minor also the storm raged fearfully. In Nicomedia, where Diocletian had fixed the seat of government, judges were stationed in

every heathen temple to compel the Christians to deny the faith, or if they refused, to deliver them to death. Blazing piles were lit in all the streets, and crowds of believers were flung with stones tied about their necks into the sea. The devastation wrought in Africa during the Diocletian persecution exceeds all description. Eusebius, speaking of the martyrs of the Thebaid, says that during many years twenty, sixty, and even a hundred men, women, and children were daily put to death with increasing cruelty. He himself had beheld in one day numbers delivered to the flames and numbers beheaded, till the very swords were blunted, and the wearied executioners had to call in others to help them.

“Rome, the capital of the heathen world, and the centre of all the abominations of idolatry, was more than any other place watered abundantly with Christian blood. Incredible multitudes suffered martyrdom there. To this the bones bear witness, of which quantities are still found in the subterranean passages or catacombs, where they were deposited by the Christians.”

The fate of the Christians in Rome, may be inferred from the manner in which they were treated in the provinces, both by the people and by the government. Rome was the common focus, from whence the stream of persecution spread like wildfire over the whole earth. There all those causes were united which occasioned the deadly strife between Paganism and Christianity. Rome, the mistress of the world, the glory, the protection, and the centre of all those heathen religions which had been by her welded and united into one, desired in her pride to tread this unyielding Christian faith like a worm into the dust, and the presence of the emperors gave a special force and validity to their bloody edicts. Amongst the depraved Roman population, the modest and pure Christians ever found a countless host of cruel and angry enemies; for in Rome, all things that were corrupt and corrupting flowed together as into a stagnant cesspool. To the seer in the mysterious Apocalypse, “Rome, that great city, which hath dominion over the kings of the earth,” was represented in the form of a woman clothed with purple and

scarlet, and gilt with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abomination and filthiness, "drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus" (Apoc. xvii.). Rome may be said, indeed, to have been but one huge slaughterhouse for Christ's flock. In no part of the earth did Christian blood flow as fast as in Rome. That this was so, is placed beyond doubt by proofs as convincing as they are strange. Let us visit those subterraneous graves of the martyrs, the catacombs, which have lately become special objects of scientific research. The fact that Christians were obliged to bury themselves underground to escape the snares of their enemies, is a proof of the fierceness of the contest which raged in the upper world. Again, if we consider the enormous size to which these subterraneous hiding-places grew, we can but marvel at the mighty power of God, which brought His Church forth victorious from such a battle.

St. Jerome, who himself diligently explored and examined these caves, thus writes of them: "Countless paths branch out on all sides, and cross each other in every direction. Thousands of dead are buried in excavations in the walls. It is but seldom that a glimmer of light can penetrate through the openings which have been made to communicate with the upper world, and dissipate a little of the gloom that shrouds the traveller as he walks with slow steps along, or creeps as he is often forced to do upon the ground." Recent inquiries show that the catacombs are entirely distinct from the quarries or sandpits of the Pagan Romans, and that they served exclusively for the use of the Catholic faithful. The walls of the passages which are excavated in the soft tufa, and which run above one another at three, four, and in some places even five different levels, are furnished on either side from top to bottom with cavities sufficiently large to contain a human body lying at full length. When one of these graves had received its occupant, the opening was walled up with bricks or with a slab of marble, to prevent hurtful exhalations. To denote the precious remains of a martyr, a phial containing some of his blood was placed in the tomb, and a palm was engraven on the stone outside. After careful examination the Church has recognised these marks as being sure signs of a martyr's resting-place. Such graves are opened only with solemn ceremonies, in order that the sacred relics may be presented for the veneration of the faithful. In the year 608 Pope Boniface the Fourth caused

twenty-eight cartloads of holy relics to be brought from the catacombs to the church formerly the Pantheon, where he placed them under the high altar. But the rich treasures of these holy graves were not thus exhausted. This huge city of the dead stretches itself all round the gates and walls of Rome. It has been calculated that the united length of its passages is 300 leagues, or 900 miles, and that their walls are lined with from five to six million tombs. Some of the inscriptions upon graves¹ containing the bones of martyrs indicate that numbers were buried together; as, for instance, "Marcella and five hundred and fifty martyrs of Christ," "Here rests Medicus with many," "Burying-place of two hundred and fifty-nine martyrs of Christ." And notwithstanding all their efforts, it was besides impossible for the Christians always to obtain the bodies, or often even the smallest relics of the martyrs. We may thus approximately reckon the total number of Christians martyred at Rome to be something over two and a half millions.²

¹ P. Marchi, S. J., "*Monumenti primitivi delle arti cristiane nella metropoli del cristianesimo.*"—P. 90.

² In addition to the passages, there are also other apartments in the catacombs which served in part as places of assembly for the love feasts, in part for the instruction of the catechumens, and in part also as chapels for the celebration of the holy sacrifice of the Mass. During the persecutions, thousands of Christians retired into this subterraneous city, to live only for the service of God and of their neighbour. On this account the separation of the two sexes was carefully provided for. We learn from an old inscription that different entrances and stairs were appropriated to men and women. Distinct places also were allotted to them during divine service. From the catacombs Pope St. Caius guided for eight years the little bark of St. Peter. There, too, St. Sixtus the Second with four deacons suffered martyrdom. The only ornaments of the bare walls are the simple paintings which may still be seen, representing consoling types and occurrences from the Old Testament or from the life of our Lord. No utensils have been discovered, excepting the innumerable little earthen lamps, all shaped like a boat, and fastened to a little chain. These served partly to light the gravediggers in their painful toil, partly to illuminate the chapels and passages, whilst some were burnt in honour of the martyrs before their tombs.

SECTION XXXIII.

VIOLENCE AND DURATION OF THE ROMAN PERSECUTION—WONDERFUL
SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY—ITS CAUSES—DIVINE GRACE—THE APO-
LOGISTS—MIRACULOUS POWERS OF THE CHRISTIANS—MIRACLES OF
THE MARTYRS.

"This frightful persecution lasted, with short intervals of respite, during a period of three hundred years. Had Christianity been the work of man, it must needs have succumbed to the blind fury of its enemies. But as it was the teaching of Jesus, the Son of God, it did but spread itself the wider, and become the more firmly rooted."

WHO that had beheld the Emperor of Rome, the absolute ruler of the world, armed with his whole power for a deadly strife with the yet nascent and feeble Christian faith, would not have trembled for its existence? But the Church preserved herself miraculously in this unequal contest. The persecution of Nero burst like a storm over her head, but she remained standing unshaken. A second, a third, and even to a tenth time the tempest raged with renewed violence against her; ten times, during the course of the first three centuries, did different emperors summon the might of Paganism to annihilate the Christian faith. The second great persecution was raised by Domitian. Trajan was the author of the third, Hadrian of the fourth, Marcus Aurelius of the fifth, Septimus Severus of the sixth, Maximinus of the seventh, Decius of the eighth, Valerian of the ninth, while Diocletian with his colleagues Maximian and Galerius inaugurated the tenth. It is with the names of these emperors that the Church's fiercest battles are connected. But Christian blood flowed scarcely less freely at other times also. For although there were emperors who not only abstained from openly persecuting the Christians, but who showed themselves well inclined to protect them, such were, however, never able to check the tide of persecution throughout the empire. The heathen populace, excited by the most shameless slanders and by the malice of their priests, and goaded

to fury by misfortunes which they ascribed to the Christians, held these latter to be men without rights, the outcasts of humanity—a race to be mercilessly exterminated.

For the most part, the persecuting edicts, when once published, remained in force, even when not in operation, and it was thus an easy matter for hostile governors to show their hatred towards the Christian teaching. From St. Justin's Apology, we learn that it was under Antoninus Pius, the noblest and most humane of the emperors—one too who openly tolerated Christianity—that Pope Telephorus, Publius Bishop of Athens, and many others, suffered martyrdom. Alexander Severus too was a patron of the Christians, and a bust of our Lord stood in his private oratory, amongst the images of the gods to which he paid special honour. This, however, did not prevent the jurisconsult, Ulpianus, captain of the imperial body-guard, from condemning to death, in Ostia, the holy Bishop St. Quiriacus, together with many priests and laymen. For three hundred years the whole might of Paganism was spent in assaults on the defenceless Christian Church; three hundred years are dyed with the blood of martyrs innumerable; and three hundred years are filled with their glorious victories. The heat of persecution, far from appearing to cool with time, seemed rather to increase in vehemence.

The last of the great persecutions, that which took place under Diocletian and his colleagues, exceeded all the others, as well in violence as in extent and duration. Hell seemed to have rallied all its forces for a last assault. One imperial edict after another, each one surpassing the former in severity, served to fan the devouring flame. Lactantius, a contemporary, thus writes: "Anguish is spreading over the whole earth; the three fiercest brutes" (the three emperors) "rage from sunrise to sundown." The number of martyrs in the first month of the persecution only, is said to have been from 15,000 to 17,000.¹ If Christianity did not succumb beneath

¹ Stolberg, "*Kirchengeschichte*," vol. ix. p. 357. If any one thinks this number

the violence of such an attack as this its triumph was indeed secured. The preparations made to accomplish its destruction were of such a kind, that to reason alone it would have seemed but folly to doubt their success. The victory of Paganism was already solemnised by triumphal pillars, medals, and arrogant inscriptions. Two marble columns, erected in Spain by Diocletian and Maximinian, celebrated the one "the destruction of the name of the Christians," the other the "universal extirpation of the superstition of Christ." A medal, also struck in honour of Diocletian, and bearing the inscription, "After the extermination of the Christian name," was designed to perpetuate the memory of his victory.

But whilst its enemies were rejoicing over the downfall of its hated name, Christianity was steadily extending its conquests far beyond the boundaries of the Roman empire. So well known and indisputable was this fact, that it was confidently appealed to by all the chief Christian writers of the time, as affording to the world the clearest proof of the truth and divinity of their faith.¹ To the Jews, Justin and Tertullian demonstrated, with overpowering force, that David's prophecy, that "the nations of the earth should serve Him, and kings should adore and cast themselves down before Him," had its fulfilment in Jesus of Nazareth. There is "no people," says Justin, "whether amongst barbarians, Greeks, or any other known race, whether they live in wagons or in tents, or wander as nomads through the desert—there is no people amongst whom prayer and thanksgiving are not offered to the Father and Creator of the universe in the name of Jesus, the crucified." And Tertullian again

exaggerated let him remember that in 1860, within two months, in Syria alone, from 15,000 to 20,000 Christians were slaughtered by the Druses and Turks.

Although it is impossible to discover the exact number of the martyrs, the reckoning of 11,000,000, to which the computations of learned men lead, ought not to appear exaggerated, especially when it is seen that in Rome alone there were 2,500,000.

¹ *Hermas*, iii. 9; *Irenæus*, c. hæc., iii. 4; *Justin.*, *Dial. cum Tryphone*, n. 117; *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Stromat.*, vi. 18; *Tertullian*, *adv. Jud.*, cap. vii., et *Apol.*, cap. xxxvii.; *Arnobius*, *adv. Gent.*, ii. 12; *Eusebius*, *Præp.*, lib. iii.; *Lactantius*, *de Morte Pers.*, iii.

demands of the Jews, in whom but in Christ the Messias, who had appeared, did all nations believe: "Parthians, to wit, Medes, Armenians, Egyptians, . . . the different races of the Moors,—Getulians, Spaniards, Gauls, Germans, Sarmatians, Dacians, Scythians, the tribes of inaccessible Britain, together with unknown peoples, provinces, and islands, impossible to reckon for numbers?" Within the empire itself, too, the numbers of Christians had increased in the most astonishing manner. Before the Christian and heathen worlds,—to the very faces of the heathen rulers, Tertullian was able confidently to maintain, that neither the numbers nor the power were wanting, that would enable the persecuted Christians to meet their persecutors as open enemies. "We are of yesterday," he says, "and yet we fill your whole kingdom, your cities, islands, fortresses, corporations; your camps, your palaces, your senates, and your courts of justice. Your temples alone are left you. To secure your overthrow it would be enough that we should leave you. Did we withdraw our immense numbers into any distant part of the world, the loss of so many citizens would cause the ruin of your empire. You would be afraid at the abandonment, at the cessation of business, at the terrible stillness as of death which would reign in the land." The heathen themselves were obliged to bear unwilling witness to the extraordinary results of the Christian preaching. Pliny the Younger, Governor of Bithynia and Pontus, complained to the Emperor Trajan of the astonishing swiftness with which the Christian superstition spread itself in the cities and through the country, insomuch that the temples were left almost deserted, and scarcely any victims were bought for sacrifice. Surprising, too, are the words of the Emperor Maximinus II.: "The destructive error of the Christians has spread confusion over almost the whole world." Elsewhere, too, he says, "There are hardly any who have not renounced the gods."

"The signs and wonders wrought by the confessors of Christ, and, above all, the joyful calmness with which they encountered torture and death in their most terrible forms, brought to the heathen the conviction

that the God of the Christians could alone be the true God. Not seldom it happened that whilst the most fearful martyrdoms were going on, voices were heard to cry from among the heathen spectators, 'We are Christians also; kill us with them.' Thus the blood of the martyrs was indeed the fruitful seed from which Christians were brought forth in ever-increasing numbers."

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth," our Lord said to the Jews, "will draw all things to Myself" (John xii. 32). These words explain the otherwise incomprehensible fact presented to us, by the wonderful spread of Christianity in the very midst of the most bloody persecution. From the cross came forth the might that conquered the world. Under the shadow of the cross the Church grew and increased, and it was the grace of the cross that subdued men's hearts to the yoke of the Christian teaching. It is to the grace of God that we must turn as the primary source of this wonder,—that grace which was able instantly to transform a Saul into the Apostle of the Gentiles, and by which, as Origen says, "many were turned, even against their wills, to become Christians." But as means however for opening hearts to receive this grace, God made use of the numerous miracles, of which more will be said presently, and of the words also of the Christian Apologists and writers. The Apologists, great men chosen by God for the task, applied the most acute intelligence to the defence of the Christian teaching, refuted the calumnies which had been invented by malice, and boldly exposed the emptiness and depravity of the heathen worship. Their words had the greater weight, inasmuch as they were for the most part men of extensive learning, who had themselves been brought up in Paganism, and who were thus well acquainted both with heathen philosophy and with the shameful excesses of idol-worship. We look with admiration at the high courage with which these Apologists placed before the Roman authorities writings, whose object was the justification of a faith the profession of which was in heathen eyes, a capital crime. The most remarkable of the Apologies which have come down to us are two written by the holy martyr St. Justin. The first and longest was addressed by him to the

Emperor Antoninus Pius; the latter and shorter one to his successor, Marcus Aurelius. There is also the most able and eloquent Apology of Tertullian, which was written by him in the year 200, and addressed to the Governor of Africa. Others also, such as Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Cyprian, and Arnobius, composed books having for their object to expose the folly and emptiness of idolatry, and to refute the numberless attacks made on Christianity. Though writings such as these were unable to stop persecution, their publication served nevertheless to gradually dissipate many prejudices, and to introduce into the heathen world a disposition more favourable towards the Christian teaching. But more powerful than any words in the work of conversion, was that gift of miracles with which God had endowed the Church. "The wonderful gifts of grace which the Church over the whole world had received from God," says Irenæus, "are not to be described." "Many," he says further on, "have the power of foretelling future things; others heal the sick by the imposition of their hands; even the dead have been raised to life again, and have continued living among us afterwards for many years." The ancient ecclesiastical writers appeal unanimously to such facts as these in demonstration of the truth and divinity of Christianity. They dwell especially on the extraordinary power which Christians were able to exercise over evil spirits; and this too with reason, for the fact of their possessing such a power is of itself sufficient to deprive the heathen of all pretext for ascribing the miraculous gifts of the Christians to their practice of diabolical arts. Tertullian hesitates not thus formally to challenge the heathen. "Let a man be brought," he says, "of whom you say that he is inspired by one of your gods; if this god does not at the command of a Christian confess himself to be a devil as he is, then let the blood of the rash Christian be shed on the spot. What can be more fair than this trial? What more certain than this proof?" Evidence of this sort could, indeed, have never failed to take effect. Eusebius tells us that on account of the miracles wrought by the apostles,

whole tribes willingly embraced the faith on the very first hearing of their preaching. Most astonishing things are related of St. Gregory, who on account of the number and greatness of his miracles, was named "*Thaumaturgus*," or the "*Wonder-worker*." On his taking possession of the see of Neo-Cæsarea, he found only seventeen Christians in that populous city. By the close of his life the whole country round about was converted to Christ, and in the town itself seventeen heathen only were to be found.

Strange is the spectacle presented to us by the so frequent miracles wrought in the torture chambers and at the heathen tribunals. The lacerated bodies of confessors would become suddenly whole and strong; fire and water would refuse to do their work, or fierce beasts would not dare to assail the holy martyrs. St. Vincent, Archdeacon of Saragossa, was torn with iron hooks and burned with red-hot plates. When cast into prison upon a bed of sharp potsherds, he sank into a calm slumber. His feet became loosed from the stake to which they were tied, and new strength diffused itself through his limbs. On awaking he saw lovely flowers instead of the potsherds, and the chamber resounded with the hymns of blessed spirits. Enraptured, he joined his voice to the heavenly choir. The guards hearing the melody and beholding the dungeon filled with celestial light, embraced the Christian faith. The flames blazed high round St. Polycarp, arching themselves above his head like a sail swelling in the wind, and a sweet smell like that of incense was diffused around. The aged martyr Pionius perished at the stake; but when the flames had died out his body remained fresh, youthful, and unharmed. Not a hair of his head or of his beard was singed, and his countenance beamed with peace and joy. The faithful rejoiced, whilst the heathen shuddered with fear. The holy martyrs Firmus and Rusticus were cast into a raging fire. They signed themselves with the cross, and the flames parted themselves on all sides, burning those who fed the fire, but leaving God's saints unharmed. At Tyre five Christians were thrown to a wild bull. The beast rushed towards the martyrs, snorting with anger, tearing up the earth with its feet, and running its horns into the ground, but refusing to advance farther even though goaded on with hot irons. At Cæsarea the body of Appianus, a martyr scarcely twenty years old, was flung into the sea. At that moment the waves rose furiously, a loud noise rent the air, and the city and surrounding country were violently shaken; and presently the sacred body appeared, washed up by the waves and left at the city gates. Fresh evidence of Christianity being the work of God, was

also furnished by the fearful judgments with which apostasy was often visited. At Lampsacus, a Christian named Nicomachus was placed on the rack and underwent all manner of torments. Death was drawing near, and his palm was almost won, when he suddenly cried out, "I never was a Christian; I will sacrifice to the gods." He was taken down from the rack, and offered the impious sacrifice. That moment a devil entered into the unhappy man and cast him to the ground; and he bit his tongue through and expired.

A marvel of another kind was equally calculated to win Pagans to Christianity. This was the calmness and joy with which Christians surrendered their bodies to every possible torment. Times without number was this most unparalleled sight presented to them, and the results showed how strongly they were wrought upon, by the evidence of supernatural power thus manifested. In the capital of Mauritania, Cassius, a clerk in the court of justice, was so beyond measure struck by the joy with which a Christian captain confessed his faith before the judge, that he refused to concur in the sentence of death, threw down his style and tablets, and himself endured death bravely for Christ. The sight of the joyful confidence, the peace and resignation with which St. Felicitas and St. Perpetua bore all the sufferings of their imprisonment, overcame Pudens, their jailor; he renounced idols, and became a Christian. According to the Roman custom, the condemned were publicly feasted on the evening before their death. The curious crowd marked with astonishment their noble and joyful bearing. Satur, one of their number, said, "Look well at our faces, that you may know us again on the day of judgment." Many were filled with fear, and many believed. The Roman youth Bonifacius went directly, on arriving at Tarsus, to the court of justice. He saw there twenty Christians undergoing the most terrible torments. He kissed their wounds and chains with tears, and was thereupon seized and cruelly tortured. Without once shrinking, he looked up to heaven with a smile, and prayed to his Redeemer. The whole scene of suffering was so moving, and showed forth so evidently the working of a higher power, that amongst the crowd loud weeping arose, and voices were heard exclaiming, "Great is the God of the Christians and of the holy martyrs! O Christ, Son of God, save us! We will all believe in Thee, flee to Thee, and overthrow the gods!" Urged by an unseen power, the Pagan crowd suddenly rushed forward towards the altar of sacrifice, overturned it, and threw stones at the judge. On the following day Bonifacius was thrown into a caldron of boiling pitch, but remained unhurt, while many of those who stirred the fire were burnt. He was then condemned to be beheaded, and had scarcely undergone

the sentence when a great earthquake shook the city. Again the heathen cried, "Great is the God of the Christians!" and many were converted. Often it happened that when sentence had been passed on one, others would present themselves before the judges, openly acknowledge themselves Christians, and hear themselves condemned to death with joy. The Church was, to use the words of St. Justin (*Dial. cum Tryphone*), like a strong vine, which shoots forth into greater strength and beauty the fewer of its branches are left remaining on it. Well might Tertullian, in his *Apology*, exclaim to the heathens, "Afflict us, torment us, crush us—in proportion as we are mowed down we increase; the blood of the martyrs is the seed of new Christians."¹

SECTION XXXIV.

VICTORY AND CONVERSION OF CONSTANTINE.

"God had by this time sufficiently proved that the foundation of the Church was His work, and that all the powers of the earth could do nothing against her. Now therefore He granted her peace by calling Constantine the Great to be her protector. The Emperor Constantine, while yet a heathen, went forth to battle against his enemy Maxentius, whose army was more numerous and stronger than his own. Constantine therefore prayed earnestly for help to the true God, and in answer to his prayer, he and all his host beheld in the sky a shining cross, with the words, 'In this sign shalt thou conquer.' He caused a standard to be made after the pattern of this cross and borne before him into battle, and then boldly encountered and overthrew the enemy's superior force; and from that time forward, about A.D. 312, became himself the champion and defender of Christendom."

CHRIST had left His Church apparently weak and defenceless, but in her weakness lay concealed the germ of all the glory and greatness of Christianity. A complete and splendid victory awaited her—a victory which had been solemnly promised to her by Him who was Himself Eternal Truth. It was needful, however, that not her existence only, but her continuance and her triumph, should be evidently shown to come from God. For this reason it was that she had to pass through centuries of severe and bloody struggles with the

¹ The heathen orator Libanius remarks the same thing (*Complaint to Julian the Apostate*). "Christianity," says he, "has come forth only the stronger and more flourishing after all the persecutions and massacres."

overwhelming might of Paganism. After seeing the manner in which she stood this trial, the honest thinker has no more room to doubt that Christianity is the work of God, and owes both its maintenance and its diffusion to no earthly power, but to the Most High alone. Now, however, the time had come when it pleased the Lord to grant rest and peace to His Church. He raised up to her, in the Emperor Constantine, a powerful patron and protector. His father, the humane and wise Constantius Chlorus, had, on the abdication of the Emperors Diocletian and Maximinian, exercised the supreme authority over a part of the West. Constantine himself, eminent for his great abilities and warlike courage, on his father's death succeeded him in the government of Spain, Gaul, and Britain, whilst the rest of the Roman Empire was oppressed beneath the cruel and licentious rule of Maxentius, Licinius, and Maximin Daia, amongst whom it was divided. Menaced by Maxentius, who at that time was leading a life of riot in Rome, Constantine crossed the Alps, entered Italy, and pushed his way victoriously until he reached the walls of Rome. The world's fate was here to be decided. Constantine feared the superior strength of the enemy. In his trouble he remembered the undisturbed prosperity enjoyed by his father, who had been always the friend of the Christians, while so many emperors hostile to them had died miserable deaths; and in fervent prayer he turned himself to the Christian's God. The result justified his confidence. One afternoon, as he was advancing at the head of a detachment of his army, there appeared, as he afterwards assured the historian Eusebius upon oath, high in the air, a shining cross, with the words, "In this sign shalt thou conquer." He himself and all his host were seized with astonishment, and he sought in vain to find out the meaning of the apparition. On the following night the vision was repeated. Christ Himself held up the same sign before him, and commanded him to copy it, and to have it borne before the army. The mysterious standard was made. It consisted of a long gilt spear, with two arms projecting so as to form a

cross, from which hung a square-shaped purple banner richly embroidered and ornamented with gold and jewels. The spear, however, was not surmounted by the eagle of Jupiter, but in its place by the two first letters of the name of Christ in the Greek character, intertwined with one another, and surrounded by a circlet of precious stones. Certified of divine aid, Constantine awaited the enemy's attack. The superstitious Maxentius had caused the Sibylline books to be consulted, and the answer had been, "The foe of Rome shall perish miserably." Thus blinded, he crossed the Tiber and risked a decisive battle. After a severe struggle his army fled in wild disorder. Thousands perished in the waters of the Tiber, among them Maxentius himself, who sprang fully armed into the river and sank in the mud. Constantine entered the city victoriously, amid the rejoicings of the people. Upon the triumphal arch which the senate and people erected to him, and which is still standing among the ruins of ancient Rome, this great victory is ascribed to the "decree of God." Constantine, moreover, caused his own statue to be set up, holding in his hand the cross, with the inscription, "Through this saving sign have I freed your city from the tyrant's yoke, and have restored the Roman people to their ancient splendour and high estate."

REVIEW OF THE HISTORY FROM THE DEATH OF CHRIST TILL THE CONVERSION OF CONSTAN- TINE.

Now that, supported by the incontestable evidence of history and guided by the sure light of faith, we have followed Christianity to the victorious issue of its three hundred years' struggle with an all-encompassing Paganism, let us for a moment place ourselves in the position of those freethinkers, as they are called, who in this most extraordinary transformation of the human race refuse to see anything divine or supernatural, but view it merely as the result of human efforts and the success of well-constructed

plans. The inconsistencies which now force themselves upon us on all sides will but serve to place the truth in a clearer light :—

In the reign of the Emperor Augustus, in a stable in the Jewish town of Bethlehem, was born one Jesus. Till His thirtieth year He led a retired life at Nazareth, as the son of an ordinary carpenter. Deeply moved by the spiritual misery in which the Jewish and heathen world lay sunk, He resolved on founding a new religion which should raise mankind from its state of degradation, and which should transform and renovate it, and exalt it to the most sublime heights of moral perfection. With a few ignorant followers, taken from the lowest class of the people, He travelled about the country seeking to gain adherents to His new teaching. As a foundation for the structure which He desired to raise, He gave Himself out to be the Son of the living God, who had come down from heaven to save sinful men from eternal death, and to gladden them by the news of life-giving truth. In the course of three years, His undertaking however provoked so much hostility among the priests and doctors and the heads of the people, that He was made the subject of a judicial persecution, given up to the authorities as a malefactor, and His death loudly demanded. All His disciples now left Him ; He had been betrayed by one of them, He was denied by another—forsaken by all ; and at last, in presence of an immense crowd of people, He ended His life on a cross, between two thieves. Nothing could equal the grief and despondency of the scattered remnant of His followers. Their bright hopes and visions had all ended in nothing, and they had already gone back to their old occupation of fishermen, when suddenly the cherished plan of Jesus again recurred to their imaginations, and they recalled the command which they had received from their Master, that they were to carry out the conversion of the world. Upon this they showed themselves publicly in Jerusalem, and announced before all the people that Jesus, whom they had nailed to the cross, had risen gloriously from the dead, and, as they themselves had been witnesses, ascended into heaven ; and that He was, moreover, none other than Christ the only-begotten Son of God, the Messias for whom their fathers had longed during so many centuries, and in whom alone salvation and grace were to be found. Thousands, on hearing these words, joined them ; and afterwards they dispersed themselves through the most distant lands, and everywhere, with the same success, amongst Greeks and barbarians alike, preached the same doctrines. Whither soever they turned their steps, wherever their voices were raised the gods were forsaken, and the Crucified was honoured and adored. Jesus, whose followers during life had been so few, soon numbered millions of worshippers, all glowing with love towards Him, and

richly adorned with heavenly virtue. The gloomy face of earth brightened, and the new creation began to unfold itself in manifold beauty. Who would have expected such results, or even deemed them possible?

Had all external circumstances favoured the apostles; had they joined in themselves the highest culture, the most profound learning, and the choicest gifts of eloquence; had they been supported and protected by imperial edicts, still results such as these would have exceeded every expectation; for wherever they came they would have found a well-organised, deeply-rooted State religion, which had reigned over the minds of the people for centuries, and was calculated to enchain its votaries by the splendour of its hierarchy and temples, the magnificence of its feasts, and the life of ease and pleasure which it recommended.

And what message was it which the apostles had to deliver to kings and people? "It is a matter of the greatest importance," we may imagine we hear them say, "that brings us among you; we are sent as the messengers of Jesus Christ to announce to you that you are living in a state of most deplorable error; the religion which you profess is but an impious delusion which will end in bringing you to eternal destruction. There is but one God, who has made heaven and earth; one God in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The Son became man in Judea and died on the cross in Jerusalem, and this crucified God-Man, Jesus by name, sends us to announce to you that, to the exclusion of all other gods, who are but evil demons, you must worship Him only, and keep His commandments. Free and slaves alike, you must love one another as brothers, you must be humble and chaste, and direct all your thoughts and endeavours to heavenly things. You must give up to Him without reserve your understanding, all your powers, your whole selves, and remain unchangeably faithful to Him until death. Earthly happiness we cannot promise you, neither can we engage that you will not have to suffer much misery and want here below; but your reward after death will be so much the more glorious. For Jesus, risen from the dead, reigns now in heaven with great power and majesty, and is there Himself preparing for His faithful ones a blessedness past all human understanding." With what bitter mockery would not such a doctrine have been received among the heathen? "What!" they would exclaim, "a crucified Jew more worthy of honour than the exalted Jupiter, who has made our nation great, powerful, and famous? Is the religion of our wise and glorious forefathers to be counted false and void? Shall we abjure as evil demons the gods who are worshipped by all the nations of the earth? Shall we destroy their altars and their splendid temples, the pride and honour of

our empire? Are we to forswear all pleasures, and at the word of a few adventurers embrace a life of continual mortification and self-denial, and all this in the hope of a heaven that no eye has ever seen?" Such and suchlike were the considerations that would necessarily have opposed themselves, like a wall of brass, to the words of the messengers of the Gospel. Was it possible that any mere human eloquence should have sufficed to penetrate such a barrier? If any one is inclined to think so, let him but look into his own heart, and reflect how difficult the exercise of Christian virtue often is, even to one who, like himself, has been born and brought up in the Christian faith. But how must it have been under yet less favourable circumstances, such as those which we have been supposing, when all things seemed calculated to frustrate the endeavours of the apostles, and to bring to nothing their undertaking, nay even to render it at the very outset impossible? All things indeed, as we have seen, conspired together to oppose Christianity. Hosts of merciless ruffians awaited but the sign of a tyrant to fling themselves with fiendish malice on the Christian believers and overwhelm them in a sea of torments. In recompense for the hard struggle that it cost to forsake a religion dear to them and deeply-rooted in their hearts, to give up customs which had become to them a second nature, and to embrace instead a life of mortification—for these and countless other sacrifices, the only earthly reward which the converts from heathenism saw before them, was a certain prospect of persecution, torture, and death. What spirit was it which had so suddenly possessed the luxurious Pagans, as to make them rush knowingly and willingly on a terrible death? Whence came that courage and power, that enabled them so completely to belie nature? Was it that they were carried away by enthusiasm? If so, would not the protracted sufferings of centuries have sufficed to recall them to reason? Or, was there something in the Christian faith that flattered the ambition of its professors? A poor explanation this! How should Christians so much as think of ambition? They professed a religion that in the eyes of the whole heathen world was branded with infamy and contempt, a religion which was credited with inculcating the most monstrous vices, one which philosophers and wits without number had vied with each other in turning into ridicule; whose teaching was regarded as the quintessence of folly, and its professors as wretched outcasts or contemptible fools.¹ By what magic power, then, did the preaching of the apostles produce such astonishing results? Surely by neither fame nor interest, neither by eloquence nor by outward

¹ When Paul was speaking of the resurrection of the dead before King Agrippa and the Roman governor Festus, the latter exclaimed in a loud voice, "Paul, thou art beside thyself" (Acts xxvi. 24).

splendour! The apostles were poor ignorant fishermen and tax-gatherers, sprung of the despised Jewish race, and personally their bearing would have been calculated rather to repel than attract followers.¹ There must then have been some great supernatural power at work, imparting to their words the astonishing force which they possessed in persuading and convincing, in breaking through the icy crust which had gathered about men's hearts. Each apostle might indeed say of himself, as Paul did, "And my speech and my preaching was not in the persuasive words of human wisdom, but in the showing of the spirit and . . . the power of God" (1 Cor. ii. 4, 5). The power which they possessed of working signs and miracles pointed them out as the messengers of the Most High God, the Creator of heaven and earth; and in this manner a divine seal was set upon their mission. "If these men were not from God," the astonished world must needs have exclaimed, "how could they work such wonders?" There is abundant evidence to show that the apostles were really gifted with these miraculous powers. So we are told by the evangelists, and so, too, the ancient records of the Church bear witness. It is vouched for, indeed, by that very boldness with which they undertook to transform the world. Never could they have hoped for success in such an enterprise, had they not been inspired and supported by the consciousness that a higher power stood ready to answer at their call. And apart from all other evidence, it would be amply proved by the spiritual transmutation and regeneration of the human race, which would otherwise remain an absolutely incomprehensible mystery. "Without the aid of miracles," writes St. John Chrysostom, "it would have been impossible that these poor, helpless, ignorant, and despised men should ever have been victorious over the whole world" (Homily on the Resurrection, t. ii.).

How evidently this is the case we must see, when we reflect how the Crucified was to the Jews a scandal, and a folly to the Gentiles (1 Cor. i. 23). It was a fact well known to all, and preached by the apostles themselves both to Jews and heathen, that Jesus Christ, under the sentence of the Roman governor, had ended His life upon the shameful cross. But how was the world to be persuaded to worship as the true and Almighty God of heaven and earth One who had been crucified as a malefactor? Before either Jew or Gentile could bow in adoration before Him, he must first of all be most firmly convinced that this same Jesus had risen again from the dead and gloriously ascended into heaven. "And if Christ be not risen again, then is our preaching vain, and your

¹ When the Apostle of the Gentiles appeared among the philosophers at Athens, some of them said, "What is it that this babbler would say?" (Acts xvii. 18).

faith is also vain" (1 Cor. xv. 14). But who might guarantee to an unbeliever the truth of a statement so incredible? Those only who should announce themselves as being the ambassadors of this crucified God. "We ourselves," they could say, "have seen the risen One; we have conversed and associated with Him, and before our own eyes He ascended into heaven." Where again, however, would have been the weight of a testimony such as this? Would not both Jew and Gentile have replied to the apostles, as formerly the Jews had done to Christ, "What signs do you do that we may believe in you?"

"If the apostles had not worked miracles," says Origen (against Celsus, book ii.), "the world would never have believed upon the strength of their word." Men would never have been won to the faith by their preaching alone; fallen humanity would never have risen so high as that millions upon millions should be able joyfully to determine upon giving up, not only all their earthly goods, but blood and life itself for the Christian religion. "Not by their words only, but by the miracles which they worked," says St. Augustine (*De Civitate Dei*, xxii. 5), "did the apostles convince the world of the resurrection and ascension of Christ. The world believed these mysteries when it heard with wonder unlearned men begin suddenly to speak in the tongues of all nations; when it beheld a man of forty years old, lame from his birth, stand up and walk; when it saw the sick and suffering cured of their ills by the mere touch of handkerchiefs brought from the bodies of the apostles; nay, even by the very shadow of Peter as he passed by falling on them; when it saw the dead recalled to life, and yet many other signs and wonders done in the name of Jesus. Should any," continues the great doctor of the Church, "call it in question that the apostles worked these miracles in order to make credible what they taught concerning the resurrection and ascension of Christ, there would yet remain this one greatest and most overpowering of miracles, namely, that without miracles the world should have believed them."

The vanity and fruitlessness of all mere human efforts in the work of conversion is most clearly evidenced by the results of Protestant missions. Since the beginning of this century the Protestant communities of England, America, Holland, and Germany have used every endeavour to vie with the Catholic Church in her missionary labours. Now, if ever, one would say, might be the time for Protestantism to gain a splendid victory over the heathen world, being, as it boasts itself, possessed of the pure Word of God, and commanding immense material means, compared with which the narrow resources of the Catholic missions are as nothing. To all the numerous colonies of Holland and England—to all countries, in short, where European arms guarantee safety and protection,

well-supported ministers have gone forth, with free and undisturbed liberty to devote themselves to their calling. The natives have been overwhelmed with Bibles and tracts; schools and chapels have arisen on every side; immense sums have been lavished on the work; enormous gifts and favours have been held out as inducements to the people to become Christians, and force even has been employed when these were unavailing. But in what have all these huge efforts for the spread of Christianity resulted? We may well be astonished at hearing! The words of Protestant missionaries themselves bear unmistakable witness that all their endeavours have failed, and that the whole undertaking has proved a barren one. "Our Church," says Heber, referring to the Protestant missions in India, "has been hitherto unfruitful," and Sir James Brooke, speaking in the year 1858 of the English missionary societies, sums up the question in these words, "You have made no progress among the Mahometans; you have made none whatever among the Hindus; you are just where you were on the first day you set foot in India." Nor is mere failure the worst result of these undertakings. Hatred and contempt for everything Christian has been but too often the legacy bequeathed by these "messengers of the Gospel" to those who should have been gladdened by the news of salvation.¹ There are some who would account for the barrenness of the Protestant missions in comparison with the astonishing success that attended the preaching of the faith in the first ages, by saying that the heathen Roman world, having attained to the summit of intellectual culture, saw clearly on the one hand the folly of idolatry, and on the other the sublimity of the Christian religion; whilst, on the contrary, the heathen of our own day, being sunk in savage barbarism, resemble irrational brutes rather than men. Of such we may inquire with reason how it was, that if Pagan Rome was raised by culture so near to Christianity, so many of her most learned men, who might have been supposed best qualified to judge of the good and bad points of both religions, so often remained external to the Christian faith, even when they did not hate and persecute it? How comes it that a Tacitus, a Seneca, a Pliny, an Ulpian, a Marcus Aurelius, and so many other of the bright lights of heathen learning are not to be found among the disciples of Jesus Christ? Why, after the conversion of Constantine, did men like Libanius and Symmachus still turn from the Christian faith? And lastly, what is the secret of that success with which Catholic missioners have been able to bend rude tribes, who have resisted all Protestant endeavours, to the yoke of the

¹ For proofs of all these facts, drawn from Protestant sources, see Marshall's excellent work, "Christian Missions, their Agents, their Method, and their Results."

Gospel, making zealous Christians out of brutal savages, transforming as it were wolves to lambs, and endowing them with the best blessings both for this life and the next? Is not the answer to this riddle to be found in our Lord's words to His apostles, "As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you" (John xx. 21); and in those also which God spoke to Jeremias concerning the false prophets, "I sent them not, neither have I commanded them" (Jer. xiv. 14)? Confident in their divine mission, the priests of the Catholic Church go forth into heathen lands bearing with them the grace and blessing of God; but this high warrant being lacking to the Protestant missionary, supernatural grace and power are lacking with it, and it is for this reason that all his efforts are fruitless.

FROM THE CONVERSION OF CONSTANTINE TILL THE SCHISM OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

SECTION XXXV.

EXALTATION OF THE CROSS—CONSTANTINE'S SERVICES TO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH—SUBSEQUENT BATTLES AND VICTORIES OF THE CHURCH OVER HEATHENDOM—PERSECUTION OF THE CHRISTIANS UNDER THE EMPEROR JULIAN, KING SAPOR THE SECOND, AND HIS SUCCESSORS.

"The cross, hitherto a sign of the deepest shame, had now become the emblem of honour and victory. It shone on the crown of Constantine, and at Rome, so long the stronghold of Paganism, it appeared surmounting the summit of the Capitol, thus announcing to the whole world the triumph of the crucified God-Man."

THE cross had been at all times an object of the highest veneration to the faithful. By it God had redeemed the world; by it sin had been blotted out, and the powers of death and hell had been overcome. But it was now when on the banks of the Tiber it had triumphed so gloriously over Paganism, that the cross for the first time emerged from the gloom of the catacombs into the light of day. Throughout the whole world, wherever the joyful message of salvation penetrates, it now appears as the victorious standard of

Christ. It decks the crowns of princes; it is set on the battlements of castles and the spires of churches, and in Rome itself it conspicuously surmounts the very hill where once Jupiter, enthroned in a splendid temple, received the homage of the nations.¹ Constantine was himself the first to set his followers the example of honouring the cross. Not only did he adorn with the cross the statue of himself which he erected in Rome, but he chose it also to be the Roman military ensign which his warriors were henceforth to defend with their lifeblood, as their glory and their pride. Fifty of the bravest and most pious of the imperial bodyguard were chosen to bear by turns the famed Labarum unto the thickest of the battle.² Subsequently each legion had a copy of this Labarum carried before it; every soldier bore the sign of the cross upon his shield, and with the cross on his helmet Constantine went himself to battle. Out of reverence for the sacred sign, none, according to an imperial edict, was ever again to be crucified or branded on the forehead with the cross.

But whilst all vied with one another in thus honouring the crucified God-Man in the instrument of His death, the sacred wood of the cross itself, on which our Lord had ended His life, seemed entirely to have disappeared. To make the spots unrecognisable where Christ had suffered and been buried, the Jews and heathen had filled up the holy sepulchre; and to force Christians to discontinue visiting the scene of the passion, the Emperor Hadrian had built a temple there two hundred years before, and had erected statues of Jupiter and Venus. Now, however, in the year 326 A.D., the mother of Constantine, the devout Empress Helena, then nearly eighty years of age, undertook a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, animated with the pious desire of discovering the

¹ The beautiful church of Ara Coeli has stood for many centuries on the same spot which the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus formerly occupied.

² According to Constantine's own words the man who bore the standard was always unhurt, and wherever it appeared the enemy retreated in terror, and was ignominiously vanquished (Stolberg, *Gesch. J. Chr.*, vol. ix. p. 451).

cross so long concealed. The idolatrous temple was pulled down and its ruins carried away, and excavations were then begun in the place pointed out by Jews and Christians as the scene of the crucifixion. The holy sepulchre was before long discovered, and near to it were found lying three crosses with the nails and Pilate's inscription. But which of these crosses was the one they were seeking, the one on which Christ had died? They took council of St. Macarius, Bishop of Jerusalem. He knelt down and prayed that God would make known the true cross through the healing of a sick woman, who should be touched with each of the three in succession. His prayer was answered in presence of the Empress and all the people. The moment the woman was touched with the third cross her sickness vanished, and she arose perfectly cured. The greatest joy filled all who were present, and the whole people exulted over the recovered treasure. A fragment of the holy cross was sent to the Emperor Constantine, and the remainder was encased in silver and placed under the guardianship of the Bishop of Jerusalem. By the Emperor's command, and with the concurrence of the Empress, a magnificent church was built over the sites of the crucifixion and resurrection. Gold and marble adorned the shrine, and Constantine himself brought gifts with royal liberality; and hither the faithful came yearly in innumerable crowds when the cross was exposed for public veneration. The Empress built splendid churches also over the Cave of Bethlehem and on the Mount of Olives, whence Christ had ascended into heaven.

“Constantine established the free exercise of the Christian religion, built splendid churches, and showed great honour and respect to priests, and more especially to the popes.”

From this time one great idea animated the mind of Constantine and guided all his actions. He was possessed by a firm conviction, that the Most High had chosen him as His instrument for aiding the Church to bring mankind to a knowledge of the true faith and worship of God. For this

reason he had no sooner assumed the empire of the West than he began to make laws favourable to the Christians. He assured to them the free and open profession of their religion. All churches and landed property which had been taken from them by the State during the time of the persecutions, he ordered should be immediately restored. That the public and private relations of life should be placed on a Christian footing, it was necessary that a Christian spirit should pervade the Roman laws. The penalties which these laws imposed on celibacy were revoked in favour of the state of virginity, to which so many Christians had dedicated themselves, and severe laws were enacted against immorality. To check the practice of child-murder and the exposing of infants, so common amongst Pagans, the Emperor provided needy parents with means of support for their children either out of the State treasury or from his private purse. He sought, also, in many ways to ameliorate the wretched condition of the slaves. Thenceforward any Christian could free his slave in church in the presence of a priest, without the ancient formalities, and impart to him at the same time all the rights of a Roman citizen. Priests had the privilege of being able to free their slaves without witnesses and outside the church. Bounds were set to the hitherto unlimited power of the master. Slaves were to be regarded as men, and whoever therefore killed a slave was to be dealt with as a murderer. In order to sanctify the Lord's Day, public business and servile work were forbidden on it, both to Christians and heathens.

While Constantine, with calm and well-considered steps, was pursuing the path he had prescribed to himself, Licinius, his brother-in-law and colleague, had assumed in the East an attitude of increasing hostility towards the Christians, and was proceeding to open persecution. This brought on a decisive struggle between the two Emperors in the year 323. Licinius published a solemn proclamation, that the result of this battle would determine whether the ancient gods or the God of the Christians were to be worshipped. Constantine

assembled his troops beneath the standard of the cross. With the words "God the Saviour" for his war-cry, he threw himself upon the enemy near Adrianople in Thrace, and put them to a disgraceful flight. He destroyed at the same time the enemy's fleet, gained a second victory over Licinius at Chalcedon, and thus secured for himself the sole empire. The East also now received the blessing of religious liberty. "All those," says the imperial edict, "who, under Licinius, were deprived of their goods or rank, or sentenced to the mines on account of their faith, are to be restored to all their rights." In his zeal for the spread of the Christian faith, Constantine addressed a formal appeal to the heathen, calling them to forsake their vain and impotent idols and joyfully to embrace the worship of Christ, the one eternal and true God. He also wrote to Sapor the Second, the young King of Persia, a letter in which he extolled the never-ending power, greatness, and infinite holiness of Christ the true God, denounced the sin and folly of idolatry, and earnestly implored the royal favour and clemency for the Christians of Persia.

The ruined and wasted churches soon rose again in greater beauty and splendour than before. Besides the churches at Jerusalem and Bethlehem, Constantine built others equally magnificent at Rome, Nicomedia, Antioch, and Tyre. But his chief care was for his new capital of Byzantium, or, as it is now called, Constantinople, so beautifully situated on the shores of the Bosphorus. In the most splendid apartment of the imperial palace he placed a golden cross adorned with precious stones. He converted the heathen temples into Christian churches, and built new churches also of astonishing size and beauty. In every way he sought to make manifest his love and veneration for the Christian religion. He provided for the splendour of all pertaining to the divine offices, and caused numerous copies of the sacred books to be made. That the priests might be able to devote themselves without interruption to the duties of their office, he secured to them ample revenues and freed them from

civil burdens. Many of the churches received rich endowments, and every citizen was free if he chose to bequeath his goods to the Church by will. The Emperor's sons were brought up by Christian teachers, and, as a rule, Christians only were nominated to the provincial governments. Bishops invariably were ranked above the highest civil officers; they had seats at the imperial table, and Constantine gladly listened to their advice. As it was the province of the bishops to guide and order the internal affairs of the Church, so Constantine looked on himself as chosen in like manner by God, to rule in such external matters as did not come under the Church's jurisdiction. For this reason he styled himself the bishop of external affairs. When the schismatic Donatists appealed to him for support in an ecclesiastical dispute, he referred them to the Head of the Church, and wrote a respectful letter to Pope Melchiades, expressing his devotion to the holy Catholic Church, and his zeal for the preservation of unity.

"The example of Constantine caused the conversion of thousands of heathens to Christianity. The false gods were abandoned and their temples deserted. In a short time heathenism was completely conquered, and the Christian religion permanently established in the Roman empire."

Notwithstanding the many unequivocal proofs of a Christian disposition which were given by Constantine, he yet put off receiving baptism till the close of his life, perhaps fearing that he might lose by fresh sins the grace so given. When, however, in the year 337, the thirty-first of his reign, he fell dangerously ill, he delayed no longer to thus secure his salvation by the reception of the holy sacrament. From that time he laid aside the imperial purple, and on the Feast of Pentecost, a few days afterwards, died clad in the white robe of the newly baptized.

When Paganism had been deprived of its chief support through the protection given by Constantine to the Christians, its decay and weakness became evident. For though every heathen was left by the Emperor free to choose whether

he would follow the gods of his fathers or embrace the Christian faith (Constantine confining himself merely to discrediting Paganism, and gradually removing its external supports, without exercising coercion on individuals), the heathen flocked into the Church notwithstanding.

The Roman idolatry however, was not destined completely to die out without one last desperate struggle. Hardly twenty-five years after the death of Constantine, whom the Christian world honoured with the title of "The Great," his nephew, Julian the Apostate, believed himself destined to reanimate the dying embers of Paganism, and exalt it to an undreamed-of pitch of power and glory. He was an adept in dissimulation from his youth, and carefully concealed the scheme which, with the aid of heathen sophists and necromancers, he had devised. No sooner, however, had he treacherously obtained the purple, than he threw off the mask and began war against Christianity with a truly diabolical malice, thus throwing the whole empire into consternation. His intention was not merely to give external support to Paganism, but to restore and ennoble it from its foundation, and to impart to it an intrinsic power and dignity. For this it was needed that the ruined temples should be restored with more than their former magnificence, and the feasts and religious ceremonies celebrated with new pomp. The heathen priests received rich incomes, and were distinguished with marks of favour. In order the more effectually to oppose the Church, Julian was not ashamed to borrow many of her institutions. Discourses were to be delivered in the temples for the religious instruction of the people. Hymns were to be sung in praise of the gods. Even heathen monasteries and convents were to be instituted; while, in emulation of the fraternal charity of Christians, hospices and poorhouses were to be founded in every city.

Julian showed special craft in his dealings with the Christians. He would not permit them to gain the honour of martyrdom, and to this end oppressed them under colour of all kinds of pretexts, which should prevent their suffer-

ings from seeming to be inflicted on account of their faith. He deprived the clergy of their incomes and privileges, loaded the rich Christians with overwhelming taxes, and closed by special enactments the chairs of learning against Christians, in order that the whole wisdom of the Galileans, as he contemptuously named them, might be limited to blind belief. Not content with denying the protection of justice to such as were steadfast in their religion, he added bitter mocking to his deeds of violence, appealing, whilst he robbed churches of their treasures, or desecrated the holy vessels, to the evangelical poverty to which Christians were bound. Under such circumstances the old heathen hatred of Christianity flamed forth anew, and in many places Christians were cruelly slain, without any serious endeavour on the Emperor's part to prevent such outrages. But in spite of all his efforts Julian could not but perceive with mortification the fruitless nature of his undertaking. He went on one occasion to the famous temple of Apollo at Antioch, there to solemnise with all pomp the yearly festival of the god. But instead of finding, as he had expected, a multitude of people in their holiday attire, he found but a single priest with a goose for sacrifice. In revenge he ordered the removal of the bones of the martyr St. Babylas, which had been deposited there and which were held in high veneration among the people; but the command was no sooner given, when, lo! the whole town hurried forth to bear away the sacred relics in solemn procession.

Julian, however, received his most signal defeat when meaning to deal the severest possible blow to Christianity; he attempted at an enormous expense to rebuild the temple of Jerusalem, intending in this way to give the lie to our Lord's prophecy that it should ever remain a desolation. It has been already related (vol. ii. p. 229 or 230) how, on this occasion God made use of evident miracles to humble His enemy; how violent blasts of wind dispersed the materials for the building; how lightning shattered the machines and tools; how an earthquake flung down the last stones of the old edifice; and

how, finally, flames burst forth out of the ground, killing some of the workmen and maiming others, and thus bringing the impious work to nothing. The death of the Emperor soon after put an end to the persecutions of the Church. He fell in battle against the Persians in his thirty-third year, after a reign of twenty months. We are told that when mortally wounded by a dart from the enemy, he cried out, flinging as he did so a handful of his blood towards heaven, "Galilean, Thou hast conquered!"

Jovian, his successor on the imperial throne, was a zealous Christian, and restored everything without delay to its condition under Constantine.

It was from Theodosius the Great, however, that expiring Paganism received the heaviest blows. By his orders numbers of heathen temples were destroyed, amongst them the famous and splendid temple of Serapis at Alexandria. At last, in the year 392, the worship of the heathen gods was formally prohibited. No one, however, was compelled to embrace Christianity, it being the desire of the Church to gain converts through conviction only.

Under the succeeding emperors the last relics of Paganism vanished gradually throughout the Roman dominions.

Although Roman Paganism had been vanquished, it was not so with idolatry throughout the world. Outside the limits of the empire the Church had many a hard battle and many a glorious victory before her. Persia was the scene of one of the severest of these struggles. The flourishing condition of Christianity in this country so irritated the Jews and the heathen Magi or priests, that they represented to King Sapor II. that the Christians were in secret communication with the Roman Emperor Constantius, who was then at war with Persia. A frightful persecution ensued, which broke out about the year 343 and lasted forty years. By the King's orders the churches were demolished, and everything desecrated that Catholics hold sacred. Priests and laymen were put to death with all kinds of torture. Those who fell by the sword during the first ten days, and whose names were known, amounted to 16,000, while the total number of victims was incalculable. Yet more cruel was the persecution under Yesdejerd I. and Vararam V. From the year 418 till 450 every sort of torture that inhumanity could devise was exhausted upon the confessors of

the faith, of whom many were bound hand and foot and cast into pits to be devoured alive by rats and mice. But the miraculous power of Christianity showed itself anew, and, despite the streams of Christian blood which continually flowed, fresh conversions took place, and miracles attested that Almighty God was with His persecuted children. We will relate but one of these as an example. A bishop and three priests were thrown into a damp dungeon by one of the chief of the Magi, and kept there for forty days, during which scarcely any food was given them. The Magian, being astonished to find them in good health and spirits after so much suffering and privation, stole out one night to keep watch at the airhole of the dungeon, expecting to see some one come and give them food, but instead, a strange and unexpected sight met his eyes. In the midst of the darkness he beheld each of the holy confessors surrounded with a halo of heavenly light. Struck with terror, he received instruction from his prisoners in the Christian faith, and died gloriously for the name of Christ.

SECTION XXXVI.

THE HERETICS—THEIR INTRIGUES AND VIOLENCE—CONDEMNATION OF THEIR TEACHING—VICTORY OF THE CHURCH.

“The Church was now to obtain victories of another kind over her internal enemies the heretics. Before this time, indeed, false doctrines had been taught, which had occasioned divisions, but these had again quickly disappeared. Now, however, God permitted certain heretics to obtain many adherents by fraud and cunning. These now boldly separated themselves from the Church and formed widespread communions or sects, which were in general named after their founders; as, for instance, Arians, Nestorians, Eutychians, Pelagians, &c.”

THE Church was to continue her earthly course in the midst alternately of persecution and consolation. “This path,” says St. Augustine (*De Civitate Dei*, xviii. 51), “she did not tread for the first time with Christ and His apostles, but with the just Abel, who was put to death by his wicked brother; and this path she must needs tread till the end of time. God’s providence has thus wisely ordered it, that on one hand the occurrence of favourable events may sustain the Church in suffering, whilst on the other sharp trials may

preserve her from the dangers of too great prosperity." We must not wonder then, if after her glorious victory over Paganism, we find the Church immediately face to face with enemies of another sort, and these the more dangerous as they were her own children, who arrogantly and ungratefully rose up against her, threatening her very existence in attacking her doctrines. Nor was this anything new. Even during the persecutions and from the days of the apostles, proud-spirited men had taught strange doctrines, contrary to revealed teaching, and had seduced many to destruction. Some, like the Nazarenes and Ebionites, desired to effect a compromise between Judaism and Christianity; others, such as Gnostics, Manichæans, Sabellians, and Paulianists, interpolated the faith with Pagan and rationalistic opinions, of which they boasted under the name of enlightenment and science. Others again, in contrast to the Gnostics and Manichæans, whose shameful excesses had brought Christianity into disrepute, professed an exaggerated strictness of morals; such were the Montanists and Novatians. In one thing, however, all sectaries were agreed, in the overweening pride with which they sought before all things their own glory. "For all the different heresies in the whole world," says St. Augustine (*Dialogues*, xlv. n. 18), "have for their mother, pride, as all rightly-believing Christians on earth have for their one mother, the Catholic Church." With the exception of Manichæanism, which reappeared later on in a variety of forms, all these different heresies in a short time died out, leaving but few traces of their existence.

From the time that the Church had vanquished her external enemies, her struggles with heresy became more serious and violent. It seemed as though hell was exerting all its power to accomplish through the treachery of the heretics, what it had been unable to bring about through open violence. Whereas hitherto, heretics had grown like tares among the wheat, numerous sects now appeared, which one after another, placed themselves in array against the Church. In the East the controversy related chiefly to points touching the doctrine

of the Holy Trinity and the Incarnation of our Lord. About the year 318, Arius, a priest of Alexandria, instigated by pride, maintained that the Divine Son was not consubstantial with the Father, that He was not born of the Father from all eternity, but that He was created in time before all other things. In the year 341, Macedonius, Bishop of Constantinople, attacked the divinity of the Holy Ghost. In the year 428, Nestorius, also Bishop of Constantinople, had, while acknowledging the divinity of the Son and the Holy Ghost, advanced the doctrine, that as there were two natures in Christ, so also there were two persons, one divine the other human; that Mary, therefore, had not borne God, but the man Christ only, and consequently could not be called "Mother of God." Eutyches, the head of a monastery near Constantinople, while opposing this heresy fell himself into a fresh one, asserting that there was in Christ but one divine nature, into which the human nature had become absorbed. Out of this heresy, about the year 622, the "Monothelite"¹ heresy was developed, which found an ardent supporter in Sergius, Patriarch of Constantinople. This heresy denied that there were in Christ two wills corresponding to the divine and the human natures; but one, the divine will, only. Whilst these heresies were spreading widely in the East, a British monk, named Pelagius, in the year 412, came forward in the West and denied original sin and the necessity of supernatural grace for salvation.

"The heretics often succeeded in obtaining the support of emperors and princes, and with their aid they cruelly oppressed and persecuted the orthodox believers."

True to their infernal origin the heretics all followed the same plan of attack which the spirit of darkness, who is called by Christ "the father of lies and a murderer from the beginning," has bequeathed to his followers. They all showed themselves well skilled in the arts of subterfuge and dissimulation, by which they might spread further the poison of their

¹ Called from the Greek words *monos*, one, and *thelein* to will.

doctrines. And if their intrigues had not the desired effect, they proceeded to forcible oppression of the orthodox Christians. The whole history of these sects is but one continuous tissue of malice, intrigue, slander, and violence against the faithful Catholics.

Thus the Arians, although anathematised by the Church, contrived to make the Catholic bishops appear as the fomenters of disunion, and so misrepresented them to the pious Emperor Constantine that he allowed the sees of those who had done most to repress heresy to be seized and given to heretics. These intruders often practised all the cruelties of heathen persecution against the faithful who remained true to their rightful pastors. Even the marked punishment of God which fell on Arius, in the year 366, as he was being conducted in triumph against the will of the archbishop and the people into the cathedral church of Constantinople, failed to bring his party to a better mind (vol. iv. 752 or 754). In the latter half of the fourth century, under the Emperors Constantius and Valens, the persecution which the Arian intrigues had long been preparing at last burst forth. Many bishops, amongst whom was Pope Liberius, were driven into exile, and throughout the whole empire the Catholics were abandoned to the violence and scorn of their enemies. Catholic laymen even were imprisoned, banished, and condemned to labour in the mines. The chief rage of the Arian party however, was directed against St. Athanasius, the fearless Patriarch of Alexandria. In the year 356 a troop of soldiers broke in upon him during the evening service in his church, discharged their arrows among the defenceless congregation, and dragged the bishop from his episcopal seat. He was subsequently disengaged by some monks from among the bodies of the dead, and assisted by them in escaping to the desert. Heathens and Arians now united in persecuting the orphaned Church. Immediately after the feast of Easter, which the faithful were obliged to celebrate in the cemetery, the Arian bishop Gregory began to spread desolation throughout the whole province. Churches and houses were

ruined and plundered, monasteries destroyed, priests and hermits loaded with chains, scourged nearly to death, and sent to labour in the mines. Forty-six bishops in all were banished. After the death of St. Athanasius, in 373, these outrages were renewed with added violence. Armed troops of Jews, and gangs of heathens, broke into the church where the saint had been used to teach, and committed enormities at the mere mention of which every Christian soul is filled with horror. Like scenes were enacted in Constantinople upon the death of the orthodox Bishop Eudozius in 370. The inhabitants sent eighty priests on a deputation to the Emperor Valens at Nicomedia, to beg him to protect them from the license of the Arians. Instead, however, of receiving any promise of relief, these were sentenced to banishment and placed on board a ship. But as soon as they had reached the open sea the crew, acting according to the orders they had received, set fire to the vessel, and, having themselves escaped, left their victims to perish in the flames. Outside the Roman Empire too the Church was fiercely persecuted by the heretics. The Arian vandals raged in Africa under the bloodthirsty tyrants Genserich and Hunerich (vol. ii. 234 and 237, or 233, 336), while in Spain Leovigild, the Arian king of the Visigoths, put his own son Hermenegild to death on account of his faith.

The same spirit of intolerance and treachery distinguished other heretics. Nestorius had clerics and monks arrested and scourged like the worst criminals if they did not conform to his doctrines. The Nestorians went with fire and sword through the Catholic province of Persia, and gradually succeeded in rooting the true faith out of the land. At a meeting of bishops at Ephesus, in the year 449, St. Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople, was so disgracefully ill-treated by the Eutychians that he died of his wounds. On account of the violence there offered to the Catholics this assembly was called the "Robbers' Synod." Pope Martin I., for opposing the unauthorised proceedings of the Monothelite emperor, Constans II., was carried off to Constantinople

treated with the greatest cruelty and insult, and finally sent to die a martyr in exile.

“As the apostles had formerly met together under the guidance of the Holy Ghost and the presidency of Peter¹ to decide such differences as had arisen, so did their successors, the bishops of the Catholic Church, act now. They assembled themselves under the presidency of the Pope, or his representatives, and examined and condemned false doctrines. Such an assembly is named a General Council or General Assembly of the Church; and its decisions, when endorsed by the Pope’s assent, are infallible, being as they are the judgments of the Church, which is invisibly guided and preserved from error by the Holy Ghost. The Council of Nicea, which was held in the year 325, is especially famous. Amongst the three hundred and eighteen bishops assembled, were many holy men whose missing eyes or hands bore witness to their sufferings for Christ in the persecutions. They all were unanimous in pronouncing sentence of excommunication upon Arius, who blindly persisted in maintaining that our Lord was not God equally with the Father. The Arian heresy was at that time very powerful, but the Church having by her solemn sentence placed upon it the seal of reprobation, its ultimate destruction was assured. All subsequent heresies have met with the like fate; and from all her fiercest contests the Church has to the present day come forth victorious.”

The stormy waves rose high and beat mightily upon the rock of Peter, whereon the Church of Christ is founded; but again and again we see the promise of Christ fulfilled, that the powers of hell should not prevail against her.

Although she was obliged to behold with sorrow thousands of her children falling away from the true faith, yet it was nevertheless diseased members only that were thus removed, as the chaff is winnowed from the wheat, or the straggling shoots pruned from the vine; for all who would so cheaply barter the priceless treasure of the faith could be Christians only in appearance, and there were indeed many who had embraced the Christian religion to please the emperor, or from a base desire of gain, without any real change of heart, and such turned like weathercocks in whatever direction the wind blew from the imperial palace. The faithful believers, on the contrary, pressed but closer round the invincible standard of the Cross, and glorious was the example which bishops, priests, and laymen gave the world of zeal in defence of the true faith, and of courage and cheerfulness in the endurance of every kind of suffering.² And what consolation, moreover, did not the Church receive

¹ Acts xv.

² See the beautiful examples of constancy, vol. ii. p. 233 and following, or 232 and following.

for the loss of her degenerate children in the conversion of so many Pagan nations which at this time took place in all parts of the old world! St. Gregory, the Illuminator, became the Apostle of Armenia in the beginning of the fourth century. He was of royal race, and when his whole family were put to death had been saved by his Christian nurse from perishing with them. He afterwards conferred baptism on the king and a great part of his subjects. To win the Iberians to the faith, Divine Providence made use of a poor Christian slave. She cured the queen from an illness by her prayers, and by this means lent a most powerful impulse to the conversion of the whole nation (vol. i. 153). About the same time the Ethiopians or Abyssinians were brought to the knowledge of Christ by St. Frumentius. He was carried into captivity in Abyssinia whilst on a journey, and eventually rose to an influential position at court. He was consecrated bishop by St. Athanasius (vol. i. 278 or 279). In Gaul, St. Martin of Tours, who from a brave soldier, had become the tender shepherd of the lambs of Christ, did wonders in converting the heathen. St. Patrick is famous as the Apostle of Ireland, where in his youth he had been a shepherd boy, and where afterwards, empowered by Pope Celestine, he preached the Gospel, founded the see of Armagh, and at his death left the Church in Ireland in a most flourishing condition. Of the other heathen nations which embraced Christianity at this time we shall speak presently.

What we ought here specially to remark, is the advantages which resulted to the Church through these heresies; for whilst the heretics sought to pervert the true doctrine, the Church so much the more busied herself in defining, explaining, and substantiating it. As soon as heresy declared itself, the bishops of the province where the evil had appeared assembled themselves; or if the false doctrines were yet more widely spread the bishops of all Christendom, met together in order to define, under the special guidance of the Holy Ghost, what was to be believed and what rejected as contrary to Christian truth. (See vol. ii. 489.) For the repression of the various heresies already named, several general councils, besides many provincial synods, were held. The first of these was the Council of Nicea against Arius and his followers. The place of president, which the great age of Pope Sylvester prevented his taking, was filled by the renowned Osius, Bishop of Cordova, with two priests as Papal

legates. The bishops met on the appointed day in a hall of the imperial palace, where the emperor himself, wishing to add to the dignity of the proceedings, appeared in a purple robe richly ornamented with gold and jewels; but full of humility and reverence he kept his eyes fixed on the ground, remained standing until the bishops had taken their seats, and then, at a sign from them, took his place on the golden chair prepared for him. After the exchange of the usual salutations the assembled fathers opened the proceedings. The blasphemous doctrine of Arius was compared with the teaching of Scripture and tradition, and on the grounds of this teaching the unity and consubstantiality of the Divine Son with the Father was solemnly proclaimed. Arius himself, being obstinate in his errors, was excommunicated. In order to give them the support of imperial authority, Constantine formally declared the decrees passed by the assembled fathers to be the law of the land. "For," he said, writing to the people of Alexandria, "what these three hundred holy bishops have pronounced can only be the utterance of God Himself, seeing that the Holy Ghost dwells in these admirable men and reveals to them the Divine will." Arius and two bishops who refused to subscribe the Nicene confession of faith were banished, to prevent their engaging in fresh intrigues.

The second general council was held at Constantinople in 381. One hundred and fifty bishops were present, who confirmed the decrees of the Council of Nicea and condemned the heresy of Macedonius, solemnly declaring that the Holy Ghost was worthy of like adoration with the Father and the Son. As there were only Eastern bishops present this council attained the rank and force of a general council only after the assent of Pope Damasus and the bishops of the West had been accorded to it. The third general council was held at Ephesus, in the year 431, against the heresy of Nestorius. At this council the book of the Gospels was placed open upon a raised throne in the middle of the church, and this custom was afterwards always observed on similar occasions. On

each side sat the two hundred assembled bishops, ranked according to the dignity of their several sees. St. Cyril of Alexandria presided as the representative of Pope Celestine. Nestorius had obstinately refused to appear, and his writings were read aloud. Hardly had this been done than the cry was raised, "Cursed be these impious errors; they are contrary to Scripture and the tradition of the fathers." Nestorius was deposed and excommunicated, and sent by the Emperor Theodosius II. to a miserable banishment. The joy of the faithful was unbounded when they learned that this heresy had been condemned, and that the title of "Mother of God" was solemnly acknowledged as belonging to the ever Blessed Virgin Mary. (See vol. ii. 291, n. 4.) The fourth general council took place at Chalcedon in the year 451. About six hundred bishops were present, and Pope St. Leo sent four legates, two bishops, and two priests to preside in his name. It was here defined, that contrary to the heresy of Eutyches, there are in Christ two natures—one divine, the other human—without mixture or alteration, both united in the same person. When the magnificent letter of Pope Leo to Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople, was read, and the fathers had heard the exactitude with which it sets forth the true doctrine, they were all filled with enthusiasm, and cried out, "So do we all believe. This is the belief of the fathers; this is the belief of the apostles. Peter himself has spoken by the mouth of Leo. Let him be anathema who does not believe thus." At the fifth general council, in the year 553, which was the second held at Constantinople, there were but few bishops from the West present, but its decisions were confirmed by Pope Vigilius. Three documents, the so-called "three chapters," were here condemned, as containing and defending the Nestorian heresy. The sixth general council, also held at Constantinople A.D. 680, was attended by one hundred and sixty bishops, and presided over by three legates sent by Pope Agatho. There the doctrine that there are two natures and two wills in Christ was confirmed, and the opposing heresies rejected. The Pelagian heresy had already

been condemned by the provincial synods of Carthage and Milevio in Africa, and when their sentence was confirmed by Pope Innocent, St. Augustine said, speaking to his own flock, "Rome has spoken, the strife is ended; may the error also have an end." At a later period, in the year 529, Semi-pelagianism, a variety of Pelagianism which had developed itself, was rejected at the famous provincial synod of Orange in Gaul, and its condemnation was confirmed by Pope Boniface II.

It seemed as though the condemnation of the Church deprived these sects of the principle of life, for from that time forward their power seemed to forsake them. The greater had been their influence and the number of their adherents, the more the fact strikes us that heresy is unable to do anything against the Catholic Church, the pillar and ground of the truth. Well might Pope Gelasius write to the Emperor Anastasius, "Can any of the enemies of the Church introduce innovations into her teaching? does she not always remain unconquered where men have regarded her downfall as certain?" There are indeed still Nestorians to be found in Eastern Syria or Mesopotamia under the name of Chaldeans, and in India under that of Thomas-Christen(?); Euty-chians are to be met with also under different appellations: in Egypt they are called Copts, in Syria Jacobites. But all bear the same stamp of decay, and seem only to have their existence prolonged, in order that they may perform a like office with regard to the Catholic Church, as do the Jews in respect to the Old Testament, the office namely, of furnishing unmistakable evidence for the antiquity of Catholic tradition respecting the sacraments, the holy sacrifice of the Mass, the honouring of the saints, and other ecclesiastical usages.

SECTION XXXVII.

THE FATHERS—MONASTIC AND EREMITICAL LIFE—ST. BENEDICT.

“At this time God glorified His Church by the means of many holy and learned men, who were celebrated as the defenders of her doctrine. They are called Fathers or Doctors of the Church.”¹

EVER since the days of the apostles there have continually arisen men, who on account of the immense learning and zeal which they have employed in defending the faith, as well as for the holiness of their lives, have been named by the Catholic Church her fathers and doctors. At no time was the activity of God's chosen servants more wonderful, and never did they arise in greater numbers, than during those centuries in which the heresies of Arius, Macedonius, Pelagius, Nestorius, and Eutyches made their appearance. These impious and widely-spread heresies raised such storms within the Church as almost to make her seem, instead of that brightly shining city on a hill of which our Lord had spoken, a place of confusion and endless discord. Against each of these false doctrines, however, a glorious array of the fathers of the Church came forward and waged a victorious battle. They it was who, as faithful sentinels, gave warning of the approaching danger. It was they who at councils defined the Catholic doctrines clearly and unmistakably, condemned false teaching, pursued the authors of discord throughout their dishonest evasions, and laid bare and demolished their sophistries with the most penetrating acuteness. With truly apostolic boldness too, they represented to such rulers as upheld the heretics while they oppressed and persecuted the faithful, the impiety of their conduct; they devoted their whole lives with ceaseless industry to the defence of the Church's teaching. Their burning words moved all hearts; in their divinely-inspired writings they have bequeathed to all nations and ages a rich treasure-

¹ See vol. i. p. 84 or 85.

house of the most lofty, profound, and consoling doctrine, whilst the incomparable holiness of their lives has caused them to shine like stars before the eyes both of their own and all succeeding generations.

“Of such divinely-inspired men the Greek Church claims St. Athanasius, Patriarch of Alexandria, who endured a long and fierce persecution from the Arians (†373); St. Basil the Great, Archbishop of Cæsarea (†379); St. Gregory of Nazianzen (†389), and St. John, surnamed Chrysostom, or Golden-mouthed (†407), both of whom were Patriarchs of Constantinople; St. Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem (†386), and St. Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria (†444), must also be mentioned. In the Latin Church we find St. Ambrose, Archbishop of Milan (†397); St. Jerome, famous for his Latin translation of the Scriptures¹ (†420); St. Augustin, Bishop of Hippo in Africa, one of the brightest lights of the Church (†430); and Popes St. Leo the Great (†461), and St. Gregory the Great (†604).”

To these great names may be added those of Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, a powerful opponent of the Arians; Gregory of Nyssa, brother of St. Basil; Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis in Cyprus; Ephraim the Syrian, deacon of the Church of Edessa; Pacianus, Bishop of Barcelona; Optatus, Bishop of Milevis; Peter Chrysologus, Archbishop of Ravenna; Nilus, a hermit of the desert of Sinai; Eucherius, Bishop of Lyons; and many others. Truly marvellous were the deeds wrought by these holy men in the battle with the enemies of the Catholic Church. Neither shame nor suffering were able to intimidate them. They stood like giant rocks unmoved amidst the fiercest storms.

What heroic courage must have filled the soul of St. Athanasius to enable him, during the nearly fifty years of his patriarchate, to sustain so tremendous a conflict with the Arians, who were then in the height of their power! To effect his destruction no slanders were spared that the fiercest malice could devise. Even in the desert, whither he had fled

¹ There were several Latin translations of Scripture before that of St. Jerome, but to his, special preference has been accorded by the Church. A holy man, and enlightened by God, St. Jerome penetrated deeply into the spirit of the Sacred Writings. He was familiar also with the Greek and Hebrew languages.

after the attack upon his church which has been before mentioned, and where the monks offered him an asylum, he was not allowed to live at peace. Great rewards were offered for his capture, dead or alive. Troops of armed men scoured the desert, and tortured the defenceless monks to induce them to reveal his hiding-place. He was forced to fly by secret paths from monastery to monastery, and from cave to cave, till at last he reached the fearful wilderness where even his persecutors dared not follow him. Here even he was still occupied with the welfare of his beloved flock, who were given over to the ravening wolves. He sent them tender and powerful letters of warning against the wiles of the Arians, consoling and strengthening them in their trials, and exhorting them to perseverance and constancy. But his own example was the most effectual exhortation. No power on earth could force him to yield one hair's breadth of Catholic truth. For this cause he was banished five times from his see, and obliged to wander in banishment over the world. For twenty years he ate the bitter bread of exile, and at one time was so completely abandoned by all men that for four months he could find no dwelling but his father's tomb. The joy and happiness of his people were indescribable each time that their patriarch, whom they loved and venerated as a father, was restored to them. The last years of his life he spent amongst them in peace, but he never tired of the contest against heresy, which he continued through letters and learned treatises, as well as by sermons to his own flock.

After the death of Athanasius, who had already broken the power of the Arians, St. Basil the Great, Archbishop of Cæsarea, and St. Gregory Nazianzen, Archbishop of Constantinople, took his place in the East as defenders of the orthodox faith. They had been from their youth united in bonds of the closest friendship; and, as students at Athens, had vied with one another, both in learning and the practice of virtue. "We knew but two streets in the town," says St. Gregory, "that leading to the church, and that leading to the schools. The rest, which led to the theatre, the shows, and

other places of profane amusement, we left to our fellow-students."

Although heir to great wealth and gifted with brilliant eloquence, St. Basil renounced worldly honours, and only sought, to use his own words, "how he might safely pass over the narrow stream of this life." In every position which Providence assigned him, he tried to serve God with an undivided heart. His ministry as a priest in Cæsarea was much blessed, but his truly apostolic character was first manifested during the famine which occurred in the year 370. He constituted himself the advocate of the poor and needy, and attacked with terrible eloquence the usury and greed of the rich. The greater part of his own fortune he parted with to relieve the general distress, and with his own hands distributed among the poor the food which he had liberally prepared for them.

In the same year, he was with much reluctance on his own part, appointed Archbishop of Cæsarea. He did not the less however, continue his simple and austere manner of life, wearing only thread-bare clothing, and eating nothing but bread and salt. The whole superfluity of his income was spent in building outside the town an immense asylum for the poor and sick, which in size nearly equalled a small village. According to St. Gregory Nazianzen, it might be accounted as one of the wonders of the world, for the multitude of the needy and afflicted who were admitted, for the admirable order which reigned within it, and for the care which was bestowed in relieving the wants of the inmates. The holy founder might often be seen himself ministering to the sick, and kissing the lepers to encourage their attendants.

St. Basil won for himself everlasting fame by the firmness which he displayed against the Arian Emperor Valens, when the latter was journeying in the East for the purpose of forcibly placing heretics in the possession of spiritual offices. All the efforts of the prefect Modestus to gain over the Archbishop were useless. When threatened with confiscation, banishment, and death, St. Basil replied, "Thou must threaten far different things to make an impression on me. He who possesses nothing need not fear the

confiscation of his goods ; and whither wouldst thou banish me ? Everywhere on earth I regard myself as a stranger. Nor have I anything to fear from chastisements, even though the first blow should put an end to the sufferings and life of my mortal body. Death in short seems a benefit to me, because it would unite me so much the sooner to my God, for whom I live and labour." "None has ever yet opposed me with such audacity," said the prefect. "Perhaps," replied Basil, "you have never yet had to do with a bishop ; for as mild and complying as we bishops are in ordinary affairs, just so immovable are we in the cause of religion. Fire, sword, iron claws, and wild beasts are then our delight." To the suggestion of Modestus, that the bishop should take till the next day to consider, Basil answered, "This delay is unnecessary ; I shall be the same to-morrow as to-day." The prefect left him, full of admiration ; and the Emperor, on hearing what had passed, was filled with respect for the conduct of the brave bishop. Later on St. Basil fell a victim to the intrigues of the Arians, and was sentenced to banishment. Just afterwards however, the Emperor's son a child six years old, fell suddenly ill, and all the efforts of the doctors to cure him were vain. St. Basil was sent for. He came ; the prince was restored to health by his prayers, and his sentence of banishment was revoked.

The East possessed another bright light in St. John, to whom posterity has justly given the name of "Chrysostom," or "the Golden-mouthed," for his speech did indeed flow forth like a stream of the purest gold from a heart filled with the love of God. He had already made wonderful progress in the science of the saints, when he was ordained priest by Flavian, Bishop of Antioch, in the year 386. For eleven years he exercised the office of a preacher in his native city, with incomparable ability and to the great benefit of his hearers. Sometimes he would speak with all the mildness of a loving father, at others with the sternness of a judge. He would now paint in glowing language the sublimity and beauty of virtue, and then again denounce the hideousness and guilt of vice. But his words ever revealed that fire of divine charity that left him no rest while he beheld his fellow-creatures in spiritual or bodily need. His zeal was yet more gloriously displayed when, much against his will, he was advanced, in the year 395, to the exalted but anxious

post of Patriarch of Constantinople. Severe beyond measure to himself, to the needy and miserable he was a most tender father. He founded hospitals and almshouses, and his enemies even fled to him for help and protection. He waged constant war against the licentiousness of the people, the vices of the nobles, and, in particular, against the presumption and impiety of the proud Empress Eudoxia, and by so doing earned for himself at once the love and veneration of the good, and the implacable hatred of the ungodly. These last, headed by the Empress, determined to effect his downfall. He was banished by order of the misguided Emperor Arcadius; and, to avoid bloodshed, secretly left the church, in which his faithful people had defended him three days and nights, and gave himself up to the soldiers, who led him into exile. That night the palace of the Emperor was powerfully shaken by an earthquake, and the Empress in terror, fell on her knees before Arcadius and implored him to recall the saint. He did so, and the patriarch, having been conducted back in triumph amid general rejoicing, continued as before to reprove the vices of the great.

But another storm soon gathered above his head. On the night before Easter, A.D. 404, soldiers forced their way into the church where 3000 catechumens were assembled to receive holy baptism, and used much violence and cruelty in order to disperse the people, who had remained always faithful to their bishop. It was outside the city walls, in the woods and thickets, that the scattered flock were forced to keep the holy festival. After Pentecost, St. John, at the Emperor's command, quitted for ever the guilty city. Immediately a great fire broke out in the church, flames sprang mysteriously from beneath the pulpit where the saint had so often preached, and the splendid temple was soon consumed, as well as the neighbouring senate-house. Amidst the greatest fatigues and sufferings, which he bore with undaunted courage, the now feeble old man was dragged off to the town of Cucusus in Armenia. Of the three years which

he spent there, an infidel writer (Gibbon) says that "they were the most celebrated of his life." Even from this remote and solitary spot he was actively engaged in uprooting Paganism in the farthest provinces, in putting down heresy, and in promoting the spread and exaltation of the Catholic Church. The veneration and attention of the world was centred on this desert spot in the mountains of Taurus. Honorius Emperor of the West, and Pope Innocent I. tried in vain to obtain his release. People from all parts of the world came to visit him, and Pope Innocent wrote him a letter of condolence which is still preserved.

The enemies of the saint, enraged at his fame and influence, never rested till they had consigned him, dying as he then was, to the farthest limits of the Roman Empire, the shores namely of the Black Sea. He got as far as Comana, in Pontus, when, on the 14th of September A.D. 407, he died from the fatigues of the journey and the cruel ill-treatment to which he was subjected by the rough soldiers who escorted him, and who hastily buried him in an obscure corner. An immense concourse of people, even from the most distant countries, came to visit his grave; and in the year 438 his relics were translated to Constantinople in solemn procession by the Emperor Theodosius, who himself came forth on foot to meet them, and, falling on his knees before the bier, begged pardon of the saint in the name of his parents.

The few examples we have given from the annals of the Eastern Church will sufficiently show the spirit which animated her fathers, with what fidelity they corresponded to their high calling, and how much the whole Church is indebted to those who in evil and troublous times were her unshaken pillars and her brightest ornaments. We shall find the same hold good with the fathers of the Western Church. Let us turn with joy and pride to the career of St. Ambrose, who by special divine guidance, from an imperial governor became Bishop of Milan, where the Church had for twenty years been laid waste by an Arian prelate. Ambrose united a remarkable strength of character with a

degree of sweetness and mildness that won the hearts of all who were open to reason. Neither imperial splendour nor the fear of displeasing those in power could make him swerve from the right path. The Arian Empress Justina in vain expended all her power, and threatened Ambrose with exile and death in order to obtain from him a church to be used for Arian worship. He always answered that "it did not become the priest to give up God's temple to heretics." When the court threatened, either by force or fraud, to take possession of any church, the faithful gathered there in crowds, and Ambrose also would betake himself to the place of danger, and keep watch with his flock, passing the time in praying and singing psalms. Looking on the church as God's property, and himself as its guardian, Ambrose was resolved to suffer anything rather than purchase a peace with the court at the price of a shameful betrayal of his trust. In a magnificent sermon which he preached on this occasion, the following words occur:—"Whoever loves me can give no greater proof of it than by not hindering me from becoming a victim for Jesus Christ." Who, too, does not admire the courage of this great bishop in cutting off the powerful Emperor Theodosius I. from the communion of the Church, until he should have done fitting penance for the massacre which he had caused in Thessalonica? (See vol. ii. 500.)

St. Augustin, who was Bishop of Hippo in Africa for thirty-six years, was wonderful both for genius and acquired learning. Through God's mercy he was rescued from the errors of his youth, and baptized by St. Ambrose in the year 387. From this time forth he devoted himself with his whole mind and soul to the service of truth and of the Church. His vast intellect had mastered every branch of human knowledge, and he was thus specially fitted to wrestle victoriously with the great heresies of his time. Against the Manichæans, to which sect he had himself formerly belonged, he composed fourteen controversial treatises. He had a sharp contest to maintain also against the Donatists, who formed

the greater part of the population of Hippo, and who bitterly persecuted the Catholics. The irresistible influence of his charity, the power of his preaching and his conversation, together with his epistles and other writings, at length enabled him to overcome this fanatical sect. The Pelagians, too, met in him an able adversary. In the works which he has left against these heretics, he treats with the most profound insight of the Catholic doctrines of grace, freewill, original sin, and infant baptism. His most glorious masterpiece, the twenty-two books of the "City of God," was written against the blasphemies of the heathen, who asserted the then imminent destruction of the Roman Empire to be a punishment from the gods on account of the spread of Christianity. In this book he refutes Pagan errors, and contrasts the empty heathen worship with the marvellous image of the "City of God," the Christian faith.

Pope St. Leo the Great also, has earned undying gratitude from the Church by his vigorous restoration of discipline, and his struggles with heresy. In those distracted times, when barbarians were pouring in from all quarters, causing, wherever they appeared, universal terror and collapse, a man of extraordinary heroism was indeed required to save the people from destruction. Such a man St. Leo showed himself in his life and actions. In the year 452, Attila, the savage king of the Huns, invaded Italy. Neither armies nor fortifications could check his progress, and the object of his ambition was nothing short of founding a universal empire for his race on the ruins of ancient Rome. Blood and ruin marked his footsteps, and at his approach the Emperor Valentinian III. abandoned his defenceless subjects to the will of the barbarians, and fled himself to the strongly-fortified town of Ravenna. With terror the Romans beheld the destroying stream direct its course towards their city. In this emergency the Pope took upon himself to defend them. Confiding in the divine power of his pastoral office he advanced as far as the Mincio to meet Attila, and presented himself before the savage conqueror, whom even kings trembled to

approach, as a messenger of peace from God. He entreated and conjured him in words which flowed from a heart divinely enlightened and filled with tender love for his menaced flock. It was the first time probably that the proud being before him had yielded to mortal man, but the sublime aspect of the suppliant, and yet more, the overwhelming power which God gave his words, so impressed the barbarian that he at once withdrew his troops to the other side of the Danube. It is related that on his soldiers asking him why he had obeyed the Roman priest in a way so contrary to his custom, he replied that while that priest was speaking, he saw another standing beside him dressed also in priestly garments, who with drawn sword threatened to slay him if he did not yield obedience to Leo. But three years had passed and Rome was again on the brink of destruction. This time the dreaded Genseric had landed at the mouth of the Tiber with his Moorish and Vandal hosts. Again protection and support were to be found in the Pope alone. At the head of his clergy, Leo went forth without the walls to meet the savage invader, and besought him to spare the city and people. Struck with surprise at the unwonted aspect of the priestly train, and moved by the words of their aged leader, Genseric promised to protect the town and citizens from fire and sword.

Another of the brightest ornaments of the Catholic Church was Pope St. Gregory the Great. Born of an illustrious Roman house and heir to great wealth, he renounced the honours that awaited him in the world, and spent his riches in works of charity. He built six monasteries in Sicily, and turned his own ancestral palace also into a religious house, which he himself entered, meaning to end his days there in pious seclusion. He was destined however, to be raised to a high place in God's Church, and to be one of her great lights. On the death of Pope Pelagius II., in the year 590, Gregory was unanimously chosen as his successor by the clergy senate and people. He escaped secretly from Rome, but the whole city united publicly in fasting and prayers, and when his retreat

was discovered he was brought back to Rome in triumph. With a firm hand he now guided the storm-tossed bark of Peter. Nothing escaped his watchful eye. Many abuses were done away with. Fresh splendour was given to the external ceremonies of God's service; even to our own day the Gregorian chant stands unsurpassed for beauty and solemnity. Everywhere the spiritual life blossomed forth anew. He encountered too with equal prudence and courage, the violence of the Longobardi and the presumptuous demands of the Greek emperors, and with untiring zeal spread abroad Christ's kingdom amongst both heathen and Arian nations.

Although mention has here been made of two only of the popes, yet already in these first centuries the Apostolic See had earned for itself the undying gratitude of the Church. The injunction, "Feed My sheep, feed My lambs," applies to each successor of St. Peter. And what faithfulness did they not show in responding to it! All blows directed against the Church, whether from within or without, fell first and most heavily upon the pope, as the shepherd of Christ's fold and the common father of the faithful. All who innocently were victims of persecution, especially bishops who had been driven from their sees by intrigue or violence, ever found in him an able and fearless protector. The vicar of Christ never ceased to furnish a beacon in the dark night of error. He was the one sure defender and refuge of the orthodox faith. Bishops and patriarchs might fall away,—the popes alone never sealed a compact with lies but wielded constantly the two-edged sword of truth. They checked the presumption of the emperors who desired to interfere in the government of the Church, and held their ground fearlessly in spite of the resentment of princes. The sphere of their activity embraced all Christendom; so too their solicitude extended itself to the concerns and needs of every Christian. To all they gave comfort, help, and counsel, and were ever on the alert to settle differences, to warn, support, soothe, and encourage. The liberality of certain of the emperors, and the alms of the faithful, had furnished the Holy See with abun-

dant revenues, and the popes contributed enormously to the relief of temporal wretchedness. Their charity spent itself in all directions. They freed captives from slavery, built hospitals for the sick and houses of refuge for orphans and strangers, and founded institutions of every sort where misery might find relief. With just pride therefore, may Catholics regard the glorious line of pontiffs of the first six centuries. Out of the sixty-three popes who preceded St. Gregory, the greater number sealed their faith with their blood, and all, seven only excepted, are honoured as saints by the Church.

“Whilst the fathers of the Church were chiefly distinguished as defenders of the faith, the hermits and monks shone as models of courageous penance.¹ Such were those devout Christians, who withdrew themselves from the pleasures of the world to prepare for a happy death by prayer and mortification. A cave in the rock or a hut made of the boughs of trees formed their dwelling; the bare ground or a few leaves served them as a bed; roots and herbs were their food and water their drink. They renounced all comforts in order to die to the world entirely and to live for God alone.”

Although the fathers of the Church were zealous in extending in every way the kingdom of God, yet the defence of the faith against heresy must be looked on as their special province. Since the heathen persecutions had come to an end, evil and destruction threatened the Church on another side. With the growth of outward security, zeal in God's service was with very many becoming gradually extinguished, and that spirit which had animated the earlier Christians to deeds of such astonishing heroism was fast disappearing. All Christendom seemed ready to sink into a condition of lethargy and worldliness; but God in His infinite mercy provided a fitting remedy for the rising evil. The Holy Spirit, who, breathing on the face of the earth, renews and transforms it, took possession of many hearts, and in the midst of the spreading relaxation there came forth a skilled, zealous, and powerful army, the lives of whose members displayed in their

¹ When the monastic life was developed from the eremitical, the name of monk was given to all who lived in conventual seclusion, whilst that of hermit was reserved for solitaries.

highest perfection the fulfilment of the evangelical virtues. The deserts of Egypt, Palestine, and Asia Minor, became peopled with Christians who courageously despising earthly things, fixed heart and mind on what was heavenly and eternal, and lived only for God and the salvation of their immortal souls. Some there were who at an earlier period had consecrated themselves to this extraordinary life. Amongst these was Paul, a youth of fifteen, who fled during the Decian persecution to the desert of the Thebais, and lived there in a cave to the great age of 113, practising perpetual penance, prayer, and contemplation. The woven leaves of the date-palm were his clothing, its fruit his food, and water his only drink. During the last sixty years of his life God provided for His faithful servant by means of a raven, which every day brought him half a loaf. But the true founder of this manner of life was St. Antony. He was born in Egypt, of rich and virtuous parents, and passed his youth in innocence and piety. At the age of eighteen he heard in church the words of the Gospel, "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast, and give to the poor," and suddenly he felt himself struck by divine grace and impelled to their literal fulfilment. He at once sold his beautiful property, divided the proceeds among the poor, and with the most wonderful zeal gave himself up entirely to the practice of devotion. He made his dwelling in a half-ruined wall that stood in a waste place. By heroic struggles with fallen nature, he prepared himself for the sublime vocation which God's providence had marked out for him. He watched whole nights in prayer, ate only once a day, and that after sunset, and at times fasted for two and even four whole days together. He was clothed in a long gown, with a goat-skin cloak over his shoulders. As his dwelling and his holy life became known to the world, the faithful came in crowds to seek counsel and help from him in their spiritual needs. The fame of his miracles, and still more the power of his words and example, drew about him many followers, who desired, under his guidance, to devote themselves to this new life, and so take as it were the king-

dom of heaven by storm. And now the desert began, in the words of Isaias, "to bloom with lilies." The mountains and valleys, it might be said, were peopled with choirs of angels. Each hermit lived in one of the many cells which lay scattered about, forming a sort of city of cells, called a *Laura*. Prayer and study of the Scriptures alternated with manual labour. The sight of zealous brethren, the silence of the desert, the solemn tones of the psalms, all combined to raise heart and mind to heavenly things. In the year 356 St. Antony died at the age of 105, tenderly loved by his spiritual sons, and the object of the veneration of all Christians.

A further step in the regulation of the monastic life was effected by St. Pachomius. The mutual charity existing amongst Christians had struck him when a Pagan soldier, and caused him to embrace the true faith. In the year 313 he betook himself to the holy patriarch Palemon, in the desert of the Egyptian Thebais. (See vol. iii. 74.) The old man tried in vain to deter the ardent youth by describing the temptations and sufferings which awaited him. Pachomius trusted in the grace of God, and practised with zeal all the exercises which his experienced master imposed on him. Being unaccustomed to watching at night Pachomius was often overcome with sleep. When this was so Palemon would go with him outside his hut, bid him fill a sack with sand and carry the heavy load up and down until he was wide awake again. Once, on the feast of Easter, Palemon said, "To-day is a feast everywhere throughout the Church; go my son, and prepare a festal banquet." The youth did as he was told, but the preparation consisted only in his pouring of a little oil over the wild herbs which they commonly ate with salt alone. He then came to Palemon and said, "Father, I have done as thou hast commanded." But when Palemon, after having said the usual grace, glanced at the food, he began to weep bitterly, saying, "My Lord and Saviour was given vinegar and gall to drink on the cross and shall I eat luxurious fare? alas, I cannot!" Pachomius entreated him to eat a little, as the day was so great a feast; but the old

man continued weeping and lamenting. Pachomius then brought bread and salt as usual, and Palemon became glad again and ate cheerfully with his beloved disciple.

The ruined and deserted village of Tabenna, in the Libyan desert, was made known to Pachomius by a voice from heaven as the abode where he should in future serve God with many others. The disciples who soon gathered round him formed one great spiritual family, who together pursued their common goal. The house in which they dwelt was divided into cells, and three of the brothers lived together in each. Meals were taken in common, but during meal-time strict silence was observed, that the mind might not be distracted from heavenly things. A trumpet summoned them to prayer, and at its sound the monks immediately left their cells. Every Saturday and Sunday they received Holy Communion. They employed themselves in cultivating the fields, bee-keeping, basket-making, and transcribing books, and what was left of their gains after their own few wants had been supplied was sent by ship to Alexandria and given to the poor. Pachomius afterwards founded eight other monasteries, which all followed the same rule of life, and reared themselves like blooming oases in the desert. Their holy founder visited them all from time to time, infusing new life and animating their zeal. At his death, which took place during the plague at Tabenna in the year 348, Pachomius was able to count nine thousand of his spiritual sons in the nine monasteries which he had founded.

Not only in Egypt, but over Palestine, Arabia, Syria, and Mesopotamia, was felt the same life-giving breath of the Holy Spirit. St. Hilary, whose life is one series of the most wonderful miracles, and St. Basil, who has been already mentioned, were founders and spiritual fathers of numerous monasteries in these countries. Everywhere reigned the same spirit of penance, the same brotherly union, and the same heroism in enduring toil and privation. In less than half a century all the deserts from the borders of Libya to the Caspian Sea were peopled and sanctified by the presence of monks and hermits. The West too, shared in this new

outpouring of grace. St. Athanasius, who had always maintained a close relationship with the great fathers of the Egyptian desert, carried the fruitful germ of this new life to Italy in his apostolic wanderings. Monasticism was spread abroad in Gaul by St. Martin of Tours, and in Sardinia by St. Fulgentius.

Had the monasteries of the desert conferred no other benefit on the Church than the training of so many holy bishops and doctors, who came forth from them as from a fruitful seminary, Christianity would owe them no small gratitude. It was the desert which prepared St. Basil, St. Jerome, St. Epiphanius, St. John Chrysostom, St. Gregory of Nazianzen, and St. Ephraim to become God's chosen instruments. There it was, that through constant warfare against the passions, and by prayer and study of the Scriptures, they acquired that heroic contempt of earthly things, that heavenly-mindedness, which raised them far above the allurements and the terrors of this world. There they imbibed that spirit of unshaken faith which supported them in the most difficult undertakings. It was in these solitudes that the fire of divine inspiration which lent such force to their words and writings was first kindled within them. The example too of the hermits, could not but act most beneficially on all Christendom. The earnestness, the zeal, and the struggles with which they advanced on the narrow path to heaven, would recall forcibly to the minds of worldly and lukewarm Christians that eternal destiny which they had well-nigh forgotten. The renown of their virtues, which spread through all lands, could not fail to awaken in many a longing after the higher life. And was not even the knowledge that God's grace was enabling such numbers to tread with joy the thorny path of penance a powerful incentive to others also to place their confidence in His help, and follow it likewise? The fathers of the Church indeed, did not omit to stimulate the faithful by pointing to the virtues of the monks; and there are numerous instances of men, who before were entirely sunk in luxury, being in this manner touched and converted. Often too, the monks had opportunities of forwarding the salvation of their fellow-men through their personal influence. For, not to speak of the power which their prayers and merits possessed with God (a power to which the learned Rufinus of Aquileia attributes the preservation and continuance of the world), it often happened that they were quite surrounded by worldly men, and even by heathens, who were attracted by the fame of their wonderful manner of living; and all accounts are agreed as to the powerful influence which the sight and the words of these holy

men exercised on all who came in contact with them. The immense numbers also who entered the monastic life testify strikingly to the sway which it exercised over men's minds. Often too, a monk would leave his beloved seclusion to perform some work of piety or charity. Once the Arian Emperor Valens meeting the monk Aphrates in the city of Antioch, reproved him, saying that solitude better besemed a monk. To this Aphrates well replied, "As a daughter who sits modestly at home will come forth if her father's house should be on fire, and fetch water to extinguish the flames, even so do I, now that my Father's house has been set on fire by thee." St. Antony himself went more than once to Alexandria, first in the year 311, to console the then bitterly persecuted Christians, and later, to check the disturbances caused by the Arians. On this occasion he added in one day to the Church more heathen than were usually converted during a whole year. Immense too, was the influence of St. Simon Stylites, who during thirty years laboured with truly apostolic power from his pillar at Antioch for the conversion of the whole world. This saint, who was once a shepherd boy, seemed to hold the destinies of nations in his hand. More than once convulsed nature was obedient to his prayers. A fierce persecution of the Christians in Persia was suddenly suspended, and individuals as well as whole nations were converted through his means. Innumerable crowds often surged like a sea round the base of his pillar and listened breathlessly to his words of warning.

"In the West the monastic life, which gradually developed itself out of the eremitical, owes its existence chiefly to that great worker of miracles, St. Benedict."

Although monasticism, according to the rule of St. Pachomius, and still more according to that of St. Basil, had spread so widely in the East, a further progress in internal organisation was needed for Western monasticism, in order to fit it for what, as we shall soon see, was its providential mission, that namely of Christianising the barbarous nations of the North. For this work God made use of His holy servant St. Benedict. Born in the year 480, at Nursia, a town in Umbria, of noble parents, he studied in Rome, where he gave proof of brilliant talents. But from his childhood his whole mind had been fixed on God and heavenly things, so that the glitter of the world was unable to seduce him. At the age of fourteen he withdrew to the terrible solitudes of Subiaco,

in the Apennines, where for three years he lived in a deep and almost inaccessible cavern. His retreat was only known to a pious hermit, who provided him each day with just sufficient food, which he let down by a rope from the top of the precipice. Here by prayer and penance Benedict purified his heart from all longings after earthly things. His dwelling having been at last discovered by some poor shepherds, the whole neighbourhood now resounded with the fame of his sanctity. The monks of the neighbouring monastery of Vicovaro chose him for their abbot, and forced him to accept the office. He zealously set himself to reform the abuses of the community, but meeting with great hindrances he again sought the solitude he loved so well. Here many zealous Christians joined him as his disciples, and for them he founded twelve monasteries. To escape the jealousy excited by his miracles and his virtues, he retired with a few monks to Monte Cassino, in the territory of Naples. Here he found an ancient temple of Apollo, where the peasantry of the neighbourhood still offered heathen sacrifices. Horrified at such an abomination, Benedict broke the idol, overthrew the altar, hewed down the grove, and converted the temple into a church, by the side of which he founded a monastery. Such was the origin of the farfamed mother-house of the Benedictine order. It was ruled over for fourteen years by its holy founder himself, who was honoured by popes and kings, and endowed by God with the gifts of miracles and prophecy.¹ Several other monasteries too, owed their origin to St. Benedict; amongst others one for devout women, which he placed under the direction of his sister, St. Scholastica. His death took place in the church at Monte Cassino, where sur-

¹ Several of these miracles are mentioned in his life by Pope St. Gregory the Great (Book ii., Dialogues). Amongst others, he relates the raising of two persons from the dead. A sorrow-stricken father brought the body of his son to the saint, and conjured him to restore it to life. Benedict prayed over the child, took him by the hand, and gave him back alive to his father. Another time the brethren brought him the body of a young monk who had been crushed to death by the falling of a wall. At Benedict's prayer his life returned, and he resumed his work at the saint's bidding.

rounded by his brethren, he sweetly fell asleep in the Lord A.D. 543. He sent his beloved disciples, Placidus and Maurus, both sons of Roman senators, the former to Sicily, the latter to Gaul, there to found monasteries of his rule.

The rule of St. Benedict is a masterpiece of enlightened wisdom and prudence. Like every religious rule, it consists of a collection of precepts having for their object to train men, on the one hand, in detachment from the world, and, on the other, in the acquisition of Christian perfection through the practice of the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience. The Benedictine rule however, does not confine itself to general precepts and directions; in it we find the duties and observances of the monastic life firmly fixed. No room is there left for private interpretation. The evils arising from the custom of monks continually passing from one convent to another are prevented by a vow binding each to remain always in the same community. Monastic life in the West owes to the rule of St. Benedict the fundamental conditions, at once of its stability and its rapid growth—great uniformity namely, wise organisation and strict union. By such means it was that St. Benedict furnished the Church with a company of heroes, bright by their virtues as the rising sun and “terrible as an army set in array.” We shall show farther on, what services this order rendered, in the work of converting and civilising the world. It is enough to mention here that in the height of its prosperity it counted 37,000 monasteries, from which are commonly reckoned to have come forth 4000 bishops, 1600 archbishops, 200 cardinals, 28 popes, 5000 holy persons, to whom the honours of canonisation and beatification have been accorded, besides learned men and writers innumerable.¹

¹ Many authors give higher figures. Some say the saints were as many as 15,000, others say 55,000. See the remarks of the learned Papebrock on John xxii. in the catalogue of popes, which is added to the *Acta Sanctorum* of the Bollandists.

SECTION XXXVIII.

MIGRATION OF RACES—CONVERSION OF THE FRANKS AND ANGLO-SAXONS
 —MISSIONARIES SENT TO THE GERMANIC RACES—ST. BONIFACE—
 INFLUENCE OF THE MONASTERIES — CHARLEMAGNE — FURTHER
 SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY IN NORTHERN AND EASTERN GERMANY.

“The migration of races in the fifth and sixth centuries was productive of fresh dangers to the Church. Rapacious hordes of heathen savages left their own countries and spread themselves through Christian lands in countless swarms, laying everything waste with fire and sword. The fiercest of these were the Huns, whose leader, Attila, styled himself the ‘Scourge of God.’ The most famous cities, and indeed whole nations were destroyed. The Roman Empire, once so mighty, succumbed after an existence of a thousand years. Indescribable misery reigned throughout Europe, till it pleased God to tame these wild hordes by means of that Church whose existence they had seemed to threaten.”

At the very time when the Church, in the midst of the decaying Roman world, was displaying such an astonishing fertility in the numbers of great and holy men whom she brought forth, a frightful storm broke over the crumbling structure of the worn-out empire. This was the migration of races. For centuries past the Roman legions had had fierce encounters with the rude but powerful nations of the north-east of Europe, and had with difficulty defended the frontier against them. This danger had been continually increasing up to the year 375, when the Huns, a savage and rapacious people from the far east, crossed the Don and began their irresistible course westward. And now for a long period Europe was but one battlefield for contending savage tribes. Those nations whom the danger threatened flung themselves like storm-tossed waves upon their western neighbours. Goths, Alani, Huns, Gepidæ, Vandals, Heruli, Rugi, Suevi, Alemanni, Boyards, Burgundians, Franks, Saxons and Longobardi, strove fiercely with one another for the fairest provinces of the empire. Everywhere ruin marked

the track of the invaders. Towns and villages were burned, walls and fortresses levelled with the ground, and Christian churches, of which there were now many in the Roman colonies, buried beneath heaps of smoking ruins. Thousands of the inhabitants fell by the sword of the conquerors; thousands were driven away into bitter servitude, and of necessity helped to swell the stream which flowed, bearing all before it, from the East. All hearts were filled with dread when Attila, king of the Huns, who called himself the "Scourge of God," approached with his seven hundred thousand warriors to chastise the degenerate nations. This terrible man was at last conquered and slain in the year 451, near Chalons, in France, by the combined forces of the Roman commander Ætius and several German kings. But the last hour of the Roman Empire in the West had struck, and it received its death-blow in the year 476 from Odoacer, king of the Heruli. Wild savage tribes now took possession unhindered of provinces which had once owned Rome as their mistress, and the face of the Old World became so changed that it would hardly be recognised as the same. A strange barbarous language replaced the ancient Latin tongue, —rude uncivilised customs prevailed everywhere, and new kingdoms sprang up on all sides. Italy was ruled by the Ostrogoths and Longobardi, Africa fell to the Vandals, the north-west of Spain to the Suevi, and the rest of the peninsula, with the south of France, to the Visigoths. To the Burgundians belonged the territory between the Rhone and the Aar, and the south of Germany and Alsace to the Alemanni. Farther north we find the Thuringians and Saxons; the Franks, who had originally settled on the Lower Rhine and the Meuse, now spread themselves over the north-east of France; the coast from the Ems to the Weser was held by the warlike Frisians; whilst Britain was seized by the hardy Anglo-Saxons.

What now was to be the world's fate in the hands of these barbarians, whose one glory and delight was in war, and who aspired only, after an honourable death on the field of battle,

to an eternal banquet in Valhalla (the hall of the dead), there, with their warrior gods, to drink their fill of mead and ale, to play at dice, to daily hack one another in pieces, and daily revive to renew the combat?

Some tribes, indeed, such as the Ostrogoths and Visigoths, the Rugi, Heruli, and Vandals, had embraced Arianism in their wanderings; but of these many were unsurpassed by the heathen themselves in ferocity. Where could be found one mighty enough to tame the mad passions of those who had overcome the rulers of the world? Had it not been that the Catholic Church now came forward, Europe, to quote the words of the Protestant writer Herder, would most probably have become "the spoil of robber chieftains, a scene of endless discord, or, it might be, a Mongolian desert." Into what depths of moral corruption would not mankind have been plunged after this influx of the nations, had not Christianity, through her victorious struggle with Paganism, already so powerfully influenced the lives and manners of the people? How evident, therefore, are the benefits which Christianity has conferred upon us. It is to the Church that the world is indebted for the bright dawn of that new age, so fruitful in all that is beautiful and great and glorious, which succeeded the horrors of the stormy night. It would seem as though these savage hordes had rushed down like ravening wolves, only that they might afterwards enter Christ's fold like gentle lambs. The unruly passions of these sons of the North were broken by the powerful but mild influence of the Church, and their exuberant nature ennobled and directed towards higher aims. They laid down their murderous weapons, and betook themselves peacefully to the cultivation of the soil; and soon we see young vigorous states advancing, slowly but surely, towards a true civilisation. An event of great importance for the foundation and spread of Christianity was the conversion of Clovis, the king of the Franks. This active and powerful prince had settled in Soissons, and was married to the pious Clotilda, the daughter of Chilperic, the Catholic king of Burgundy. In the year 496 Clovis

marched against the warlike tribe of the Alemanni. A bloody battle was fought at Zülpich (between Bonn and Aachen), and the Frankish hosts began to give way. Seeing himself confronted by imminent danger and feeling forsaken by his gods, Clovis raised his eyes to heaven, and cried to the Divine Saviour, of whose power Clotilda had so often spoken to him, "Jesus Christ, Thou whom Clotilda calls the Son of the living God, to Thee do I pray for help! grant me the victory, and I will believe in Thee." Courage and strength came back to himself and his followers. The tide of battle turned, the king of the Alemanni was slain, the enemy fled or asked mercy, and a brilliant victory and the conquest of the hostile country was the answer to the prayer of faith. St. Remigius, Bishop of Rheims, instructed the king in the Christian doctrines, and at Christmas, A.D. 496, baptized him, together with three thousand of his followers. (See vol. iv. p. 183 or 184.) The following pregnant and beautiful words occur in a letter afterwards addressed by St. Remigius to his royal convert, to whom, as being for far and near the one Catholic among many Arian princes, the eyes of all Catholics were necessarily turned:—

"Be a father and a protector to your people; honour the clergy, comfort and support the poor, redeem captives, feed orphans, protect widows, avoid oppression. Let thy door be ever open to such as seek justice."

Owing to the persevering activity of the popes, the labours of many holy bishops, and the influence of the Franks, Arianism, once so powerful in Gaul, Spain, and Italy, gradually disappeared in these countries.

The Church had begun, through the conversion of the Franks, what was now to be her task. Through the devastating wars of the preceding century deep wounds had been inflicted on Christendom. Barbarous heathens now dwelt where formerly had stood flourishing Christian communities. Such hurts had now to be repaired, and those who had so wounded the Church were to be brought into her fold.

"Men of God sent by the Pope, set forth to bear the tidings of salvation to the barbarous tribes. Confidently trusting in God, with the Cross

and the Gospels in their hands, they courageously made known, amidst great dangers, the doctrine of the Saviour."

A beautiful instance of this kind is furnished to us in the conversion of the heathen Anglo-Saxons. This nation had begun the conquest of Britain, then a Roman province, in the year 450, and had succeeded, after a hundred years of hard fighting, in dispossessing the original inhabitants. These belonged already to the Church, and the attitude of the conquerors was thus from the first one of hostility to Christianity. And so it came to pass that at the end of the sixth century the seven Anglo-Saxon kingdoms which had arisen in England were still plunged in the darkness of Paganism. But the time was now come when the Sun of Justice was to rise upon them and dispense His blessings in all their splendour and fulness. The resolution of carrying the glad tidings of the Gospel to this island people, had been already conceived and matured in the great and generous soul of a man burning with zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of his fellow-men. St. Gregory the Great, while yet a monk, once crossed the market-place at Rome, where some well-grown youths of noble aspect were exposed for sale as slaves. On learning that these boys, whom nature had so richly endowed, belonged to the heathen nation of the Angles, the desire was kindled within him that their souls as well as their bodies might be richly adorned, and that they themselves might be companions of angels and co-heirs with Christ. Nothing but the Pope's command prevented him from immediately undertaking the journey to England. When he himself succeeded to the Papal Chair, he earnestly considered how he might fulfil his early wish. Undeterred by the savageness of the people, which was depicted to him in the most frightful colours, in the year 596 he sent forty Benedictines, under the guidance of the holy abbot Augustine, to undertake the conversion of Britain. Full of confidence, the missionaries landed in the island of Thanet, and sent a message to King Ethelbert of Kent, saying that they were come to teach him the way of eternal life. Ethelbert was already half inclined

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towards Christianity through the influence of his pious wife Bertha, a Frankish princess. He came in person to meet the missionaries, receiving them however, in the open air, as a precaution against enchantments. The monks presented themselves before the king and his nobles in solemn procession, praying and singing hymns, whilst a silver cross was borne before them. At their petition the king received them as guests, and gave them liberty to preach their doctrine as they pleased. Their apostolic labours at Canterbury soon gained them the love and confidence of the people. Their pure and austere lives and their disinterested zeal excited reverence and admiration in the minds of the heathen, whilst the numerous miracles which God wrought by means of His servants vouched for the truth of what they taught. Before long Ethelbert yielded to divine grace and received baptism, and his example was so powerful with his subjects that at the Christmas of the year 597 ten thousand of them entered the Church in like manner. Overjoyed at so great success, Pope Gregory caused St. Augustine to be consecrated the first bishop and metropolitan of the Anglo-Saxons, sent him fresh assistants, and commissioned him to appoint twelve other bishops as his suffragans.

In spite of hindrances, this mission was especially blessed by God. The warlike Anglo-Saxons came in crowds to hear the words of salvation and to receive baptism. Churches and monasteries were soon thickly scattered throughout the whole country. Learning also flourished, together with Christian virtue. Schools were founded in which the sciences and the ancient languages were taught. The school of Canterbury was especially famous, and possessed a valuable collection of books. The venerable Bede tells us that he knew many brought up in this school who were as familiar with the Greek and Latin tongues as with their own.¹ The same author,

¹ Theodore, a monk of great piety, genius, and learning, a native of Tarsus in Cilicia, founded this school when Archbishop of Canterbury. He himself brought many books from Rome, amongst others a fine manuscript copy of the immortal works of Homer. His friend the venerable Abbot Benedict Biscop made several journeys to Rome, and each time brought back with him additions to the library of the college. Its superintendent and principal teacher was the learned and pious African, Hadrian, Abbot of Canterbury. (See Stolberg's *Life of Alfred the Great*, p. 101.)

speaking again of the flourishing condition of the country, says, "Never were there such happy times in Britain since she was conquered by the Angles. Her kings were Christian heroes, the terror of their enemies, and the whole nation was striving after one high object." What a glory is reflected on the English Church by the fact that no less than twenty-three Saxon kings and sixty queens and members of royal families are honoured as saints! Later on we shall see too, by the number of missionaries she sent forth, with what a spirit of life and vigour that Church was animated.

"About this time Germany also was converted and civilised. St. Severinus preached in Austria; later on St. Columban and St. Gall on the lake of Constance and in Switzerland; St. Kilian and St. Wilibald in Franconia; St. Rupert and St. Corbinian in Bavaria and the neighbouring regions; St. Ludger in Westphalia; and St. Anscharius in the countries of the North."

In Germany as in England, Christianity had made considerable progress in the first centuries. Everywhere throughout the Roman possessions in Germany, especially in the colonies situated on the frontiers of Italy and on the banks of the Rhine and Danube, we find Christian communities; and bishops' sees had existed from an early period in Sion, Coire, Brixen, Augsburg, Passau, Ratisbon, Strasburg, Mayence, Cologne, Treves, &c. These, however, had been overrun and destroyed by the barbarians. The vineyard of the Lord was laid waste, and neither priests nor people were spared. Treves, the site of the venerable see of St. Eucharius, was several times demolished. Attila, on his way to France, sacked Mayence in the year 451. Its bishop fell like a faithful shepherd beneath the sword of the barbarians, together with many of his flock. When, returning after his defeat at Chalons breathing fury and vengeance, Attila found in Cologne St. Ursula and her companions, who had fled thither from Britain in fear of the Anglo-Saxons, they were slain without mercy, together with many of the Christian inhabitants of the city, to the number in all of eleven thousand. (See the Bollandists, October 16.) In consequence of such atrocities great moral disorders resulted, even where Christianity was not completely destroyed.

But this period of darkness and gloom was before long fol-

lowed by a happy reaction. A great and exalted destiny was being prepared for our native land. The life and labours of St. Severinus shine like the light of a kindly star from out this stormy time. About the middle of the fifth century this holy man came from a distant land (apparently Africa) to the neighbourhood of Vienna, where he built a small monastery for himself and his companions. For many years he was the guide and refuge of all the tribes around. The inhabitants of the ancient province of Noricum (part of Austria and Bavaria) gazed with wonder and awe at the holy apostle, who walked barefoot in the depth of winter, whose countenance amidst all his privations shone almost like that of an angel, who preached Christ with such untiring zeal, and who turned aside the people from Pagan superstition and Arian errors, and in all afflictions stood beside them like an angel of comfort and counsel. The old Roman population and the barbarians alike held him in respect. The kings of the Goths Rugi Heruli and Alemanni, paid him high honour, and willingly received from him both advice and warning. It is known how Odoacer, the hereditary chief of the Heruli, when marching upon Italy, presented himself before the poor monk to ask his blessing, and how the saint foretold to him his glorious future. Oppressed cities and districts sent from far and near to implore his help, and the amount of evil which his mediation averted, and the good that he effected, is incalculable. He died surrounded by his weeping disciples, having founded many monasteries and turned many hearts, and so gained many souls to God. Six years later his followers bore his yet incorrupt body to Italy, and interred it with all honour at Naples.

It was by a hard struggle only that the fierce and untamed sons of the German forests were made subject to the yoke of Christ; and it was at the price of much toil and bloodshed that their conversion was accomplished. God's mercy however, had already prepared in France Ireland and England, a fruitful seminary for apostles of the faith, who, from love to their Redeemer, gave themselves up with joy to labour for the salvation of Germany. It was with the sixth century

that the spiritual victories began of these heroic men to whom our country owes so deep a debt of gratitude. Among the first was Fridolin, an Irish priest. He preached the Gospel to the Alemanni, and founded a convent for women on the barren island of Seckingen, that the sight of the heavenly life led there might gain the rude inhabitants of the district to higher things. Turning southward, he built the monastery of St. Hilary, around which the town of Glarus sprung up.

Towards the end of this century the Irish priest Columban began his fruitful labours. In the year 590 he founded the famous monastery of Luxeuil, in the Vosges, whence came forth so many holy monks, bishops, and apostles. His boldness drew on him the hatred of the Frankish queen Brunhilda, and in the year 610 he sought refuge in Alemannia. He was driven from the neighbourhood of Zurich by the obduracy of the Pagan inhabitants, together with his zealous follower Gall. At Bregeuz, on the lake of Constance, they found in an old church three gilded images, to which the inhabitants paid divine honours. Indignant at this folly, Gall broke the idols, flung the pieces into the lake, and eloquently exhorted the people to be converted. For three years the saints laboured with untiring zeal for their good; but as all things seemed combined to defeat their efforts, Columban at last shook the dust of the ungrateful country from his feet, and departed in the year 613 for Lombardy, and there founded the monastery of Bobbio, under the protection of King Agilulf. His disciple Gall however, being at that time ill with a fever, was forced to remain behind, and was hospitably received by the priest Willimar in Arbon, on the lake of Constance.

Hardly had Gall recovered from his sickness than he felt himself impelled to seek a dwelling-place in some silent waste. One day, therefore, he said to the deacon Hiltibold, who knew that country well, "Hast thou ever, my son, met with any place in these deserts well supplied with water, and suited for the erection of a cell and oratory? for I long greatly to pass my days in solitude." The

deacon answered, "Such a place I do indeed know ; but the mountains rise high around it and form narrow valleys ; fierce beasts too, live there—bears, wild boars, and herds of wolves. I fear lest they should devour thee." But the saint replied undaunted, "If God be with us who shall be against us?" The following night he spent in prayer, and early the next morning he set forth, with the deacon for his guide. They carried a small quantity of provisions, and were resolved never to rest until they had found the desired spot. They travelled till evening without eating anything, when they reached the little river Steinach. The deacon set about catching fish, and preparing them for their meal. Gall meanwhile turned aside to pray. As he went, his foot caught in a bramble, and he fell. He took this as a sign from God, and cried joyfully, "This is the place of my rest for ever ; here shall I dwell, for this is the place that I have chosen for myself." He set up a wooden cross, hung his relic cases upon it, and then, kneeling before it, prayed fervently for God's blessing upon his undertaking. "Lord Jesus Christ," he said, "Thou who wast pleased to take our flesh of a virgin, and to suffer death for the salvation of men, despise not my prayer because of my sins, but prepare in this place a dwelling consecrated to Thy service, and to the honour of Thy holy mother, and of Thy martyrs and confessors." They then ate their meal, and lay down upon the earth beside their fire. During the night Gall arose to pray. While he was thus employed a bear came down from the mountain to devour the remains of the food. The saint ordered him in God's name to fetch wood for the fire, and he immediately obeyed. In return Gall gave him a loaf from their little store, commanding him at the same time in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to remain henceforth in the mountains and hurt neither man nor beast. Some evil spirits too, who sought to frighten him from the place by all kinds of terrible apparitions, were forced by his prayers to flee howling with pain. The next morning they explored the valley and the mountains. They discovered in a plain a pleasant spot well suited for the building of cells, and Gall said, "The Lord is truly in this place," and resolved that here he would carry out his plan. From that day forth no more traces were to be found of the numbers of snakes that had till then made the place so dangerous. Here Gall passed three days in prayer and fasting, and then returned to Arbon. Shortly afterwards he freed the daughter of Gunzo, the leader of the Alemanni, from an unclean spirit by prayer and imposition of hands, and under the protection of this prince he erected his new cloister. From this modest hermitage sprung the famous Abbey of St. Gall, which received the rule of St. Benedict in the eighth century, and long afterwards spread far and wide the influence of its learning

and virtue. Gall laboured many years for the welfare both of the Christians and the heathens of the country, and died rich in merits, at the age of ninety-five.

The work of the evangelisation of Germany was, however, only at its first beginning. Neither the barbarism of the inhabitants, the wildness of the country, nor the number and greatness of the dangers to be encountered could cool the fervour of that zeal for souls which the Holy Spirit had kindled in the hearts of so many of God's servants. All these hindrances did but add to their glory and merit, and increase the joy with which we now, after the lapse of more than a thousand years, trace out their footsteps. "How lovely," as Holy Scripture says, "are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace!"

St. Emmeran appeared in Bavaria about the middle of the seventh century. He renounced his see in Aquitaine in order that he might extend God's kingdom among the wild Avari. The Duke of Bavaria however, entreated him to remain in Ratisbon, and to pursue his apostolic calling amongst a people who were not yet entirely reclaimed from Paganism. For three years this holy man went from town to town and village to village, zealously preaching the Gospel. Superstitions and corruptions were very prevalent among the Christian population, and they and the heathen alike listened with admiration to the words of the holy stranger, who told them such wonderful and beautiful things of the Christian faith. New light was shed upon their souls, and their past lives seemed to them but as folly and madness. The mild beams of Christianity melted the hardness of their hearts, and they bowed their necks willingly to the Lord's yoke. How could they indeed have withstood the admonitions of a saint all whose words brought peace, who was as a father to the poor, and who lovingly shared with those in need all that was given to him? His active life was crowned by a heroic death. Unjustly suspected of a great crime, he was put to death on his way to Rome in the year 652, and suffered the most cruel tortures with heavenly joy and patience.

Towards the end of the same century the holy Benedictine monk, Kilian, came from Ireland. Once, in reading the Holy Scriptures, his mind had been arrested by our Lord's words, "Lift up your eyes and see the fields, they are white for the harvest. Who will follow Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross." Obedient to the divine command, he went with a few companions in pilgrimage to Rome, besought God's help at the tomb of the Prince of the Apostles, and furnished with the needful powers from Pope Conon, turned his steps towards Franconia and entered the territory of Würzburg. On seeing this beautiful land, with its highly-gifted inhabitants yet lying in the darkness of heathenism, he lifted up his voice, and powerfully set forth the excellence and divinity of Christianity, and convinced the people of the vanity of their idols. Gotzbert, the Frankish duke, was received into the Church, and his example was followed by great numbers of his subjects. Soon however, the apostolic zeal with which the saint exercised his calling gained him the palm of martyrdom. He boldly called upon the duke to give up an unlawful connection with his brother's wife, and she, enraged at her rejection, caused the saint and his companions to be murdered.

The name of St. Rupert, or Ruprecht, is also conspicuous among the apostles of Germany. He was driven from his see of Worms, but welcomed with great joy at Ratisbon by the Bavarian duke Theodo. The hospitality of the prince was well repaid. The saint instructed him in the Catholic faith, freed him by holy baptism from the servitude of Satan, and made him a child of God and heir of heaven. Again the conversion of the prince brought about that of many of his subjects. St. Rupert went into Hungary, everywhere zealously preaching the Gospel. On his road back he came to the remains of what had been once the Roman colony of Juvavia, and he chose this place as the site of his future episcopate. The city of Salzburg, with the great abbey of St. Peter, soon rose out of the gigantic ruins. To aid in the gradual introduction of milder manners among the people, he

founded a convent for women, in which young girls were to be brought up in all Christian virtues; and he intrusted the government of it to his kinswoman Ehrentrude. At last, on Easter Sunday, after he had celebrated mass, given the kiss of peace, and blessed the people, he fell on his knees in fervent prayer, and yielded up his soul to God.

St. Corbinian was chosen by Divine Providence to aid the work of St. Rupert in Bavaria. While yet young he had consecrated himself to God in a monastery near Paris, whence the fame of his holiness went abroad. But though created a bishop by Pope Gregory II., overwhelmed with honours by the Frankish mayor of the palace, and admired by every one, he yet desired to renounce all earthly greatness. He went on a pilgrimage to Rome, and earnestly besought the Pope that he would allow him to lead a poor and hidden life. God had provided for the granting of his request. He was sent on the mission to Bavaria, where he had already been hospitably received on his journey to Rome. On arriving there he refused to see the young Duke Grimoald until he had separated himself from his brother's widow. He erected his episcopal see in Freisingen, and administered the Christian law with great firmness and courage in the midst of the rude inhabitants. He waged a zealous war against the superstitious customs which were yet to be found among the people. He built himself a house and chapel on a mountain near the city. Here he was wont to give himself up to solitary prayer, and from here he diffused around the blessings of his holy life and works. He saw the hour of his death approach with wonderful calmness. Once more in his pontifical robes he offered the holy sacrifice, then retiring to his house, he signed himself with the sign of the Cross, and departed without a struggle, A.D. 730.

“But amongst all those who came as missionaries amongst our forefathers, St. Bonifacius shines forth pre-eminent, insomuch that he has received the honourable title of the ‘Apostle of Germany.’ On account of his great merit he was appointed Archbishop of Mayence by the Pope, and gained the crown of martyrdom in the year 755, when preaching the Gospel in Friesland.”

The work of the conversion of Germany advanced with rapid strides. Great as had been the deeds of her earlier apostles, those of the British Benedictine Winfried, or Bonifacius as he was afterwards called, were yet greater. Treading in the footsteps of his holy predecessors, it fell to his lot in part to spread, and in part to confirm, God's kingdom throughout the whole extent of the Frankish territory; and great as was the zeal with which he undertook all the labours and difficulties of his vocation, so great was the divine blessing which everywhere followed him in it.

Bright was the rise of this fair star in the Church's firmament. From his earliest youth he had lived in monastic retirement, and spent his time in study and the exercises of piety. In the year 710, at the age of thirty, he was ordained priest; and he at once turned his eyes to the inhospitable shores of Germany, with a longing desire to win her Pagan inhabitants to Christ. Nothing would avail to quench his zeal or to keep him longer at home. Nothing daunted by the difficulties which beset him on his first arrival in Friesland in the year 716, and which had forced him to return, he betook himself two years later to Rome, to ask God's blessing on his enterprise at the tomb of the Prince of the Apostles, and to obtain the commission of the Vicar of Christ and the needful powers for the preaching of the Gospel. Pope Gregory II. joyfully granted his desire, and gave his apostolic mission to all the tribes of Northern Germany to this generous monk, who had offered himself of his own will, and with such earnest desire, to encounter all the toils and dangers of an evangelist among a savage people. Assured by the Pope's approval that his call was from God, Boniface entered with new confidence upon his blessed course. He went through Bavaria, Thuringia, and Saxony preaching the Gospel. On hearing that King Radbod, the mortal enemy of Christianity, was dead, he returned once more to Friesland, the scene of his first labours. His preaching was within three years crowned with wonderful success. The idols were overthrown, and everywhere temples were raised to the true God. St. Willibrod, Bishop of Utrecht, who had himself been sent by the Holy See to those parts, and had already reaped much fruit there, was so overjoyed at the zeal and success of his new companion, that he wished to choose him for his successor, and to consecrate him bishop. Boniface, however, humbly declined this honour, that he might the better fulfil his mission and devote himself more entirely to the conversion of the German race. In the year 722 he went to Hesse, where he

converted many thousands of the heathen, and laboured with such happy results that he was shortly able to send very hopeful reports of his work to Rome.

Zealous for the advancement of the German Church, Gregory II. summoned the saint to Rome, and on the 30th of November 723 consecrated him bishop, but without assigning to him a diocese. At the tomb of Peter, Winfried swore fealty to the Holy See, and to the Vicar of Jesus Christ, "to whom God in the person of St. Peter had given power to bind and to loose." He solemnly promised "ever to uphold the Catholic doctrine in all its integrity, and to continue in the unity of the faith, on the preservation of which the welfare of all Christians depended. Should any bishop turn aside from the precepts of the fathers, he bound himself to hold no communion with him, still less to follow his example, and in all such cases to at once inform the Holy See." In consideration of the great work which Winfried had already wrought in Germany, and doubtless in joyful anticipation of that which remained for him to do, the Pope conferred on him the name of "Bonifacius," *Doer of good*, and dismissed him, fortified with the apostolic blessing, to his field of labour. Far different in its expression was the ambition of Boniface to that of the world's heroes. He passed peacefully through the German territory, his glance, full of meekness and charity, declaring him the messenger of heaven. Pride was unknown to him; he appeared in the same coarse garment before prince and peasant alike, and often he was forced to work with his own hands for the necessities of life. But yet in what a wonderful manner did he not fulfil his mission of benefactor to the German race! In many places where Christianity was almost dying out, it revived and flourished beneath his fostering hand, and he preached the sweet name of Jesus to whole nations who had never before heard its sound. Wherever he went he destroyed the heathen sanctuaries which were found on the peaks of the mountains and in the gloom of the forests. He laid his axe boldly at the root of the oak of Geismar, long sacred to the god Thor. Crowds of heathen surrounded him, expecting every moment a flash of lightning which should strike the blasphemer dead. Great was their surprise when, after several blows, the saint remained unhurt, and yet more when a great storm suddenly arose which cast the huge tree to the ground and split it into four equal parts! Many were converted, and Boniface built a little church, dedicated to St. Peter, out of the wood of the fallen oak. In many other places, too, churches and chapels were erected for the new Christian communities. They were often burned and destroyed by the fierce Saxons, but they soon rose again out of the ruins. The fame of St. Boniface spread into all lands, and zealous

assistants joined him from England. Amongst these was St. Lullus, his successor in the archbishopric of Mayence. St. Burkard, first Bishop of Würzburg, St. Willibald, first Bishop of Eichstadt, his brother St. Wunibald, superior of a monastery, and many others. Holy women came too, who taking the direction of nunneries, spread blessings far and wide. Such were Chunihild in Thuringia, St. Walpurgis (sister to St. Willibald, and a kinswoman of Boniface) in Heidenheim near Eichstadt, and St. Thecla in Kitzingen. But the most famous of all these is St. Lioba, who was also related to St. Boniface. She was eloquent, learned both in Holy Scripture and in the human sciences, and endowed with the most unequalled goodness of heart. She presided over a convent of nuns at Bischofsheim, and in the education of young girls exercised a quiet but efficacious apostolate, and watched over Franconia like a guardian angel.

In the year 732 Gregory III. nominated the Apostle of Germany to be Archbishop and Vicar Apostolic, with full powers to consecrate bishops and to erect dioceses. Having, in the year 733, made his third and last pilgrimage to Rome with four disciples, and there renewed his courage for fresh undertakings, he proceeded to settle the ecclesiastical division of Germany. Bavaria he divided into the four bishoprics of Salsburg, Ratisbon, Freisingen, and Passau. Those of Eichstadt, Würzburg, Bûrburg (of which the episcopal chair was afterwards removed to Fritzlar), and Erfurt were erected in Franconia, Hesse, and Thuringia. From these sees, all of which were provided with watchful and well-tried pastors, fresh life was spread forth into all parts. To keep up a constant supply of zealous priests, St. Boniface founded also many monasteries, such as those of Amöneburg and Fritzlar. He took an especial interest in the monastery of Fulda, which he founded by the instrumentality of his beloved disciple Sturm; this institution being meant by him to serve as a seminary for missionaries for all parts of Germany, and being the spot too, on which he had himself fixed as his last resting-place. The activity of Boniface extended itself in ever-wider circles. The Church of Gaul honours him as her restorer. Appointed legate by Pope Zacharias, he held, with the assent of Pepin and Karlmann the Frankish mayors of the palace, many synods, in which he reformed abuses, tightened the reins of discipline, examined and condemned heresies, and established many excellent rules. The better to secure the spiritual regeneration of Germany, Boniface was made Archbishop of Mayence by Pope Zacharias, and intrusted with the ecclesiastical control of the whole country. Thus Boniface completed his great and glorious task. For more than thirty years of toil, peril, and privation, he had devoted himself to the salvation of Germany; and as the fruit of

his sacrifice, he beheld the darkness of heathenism dispelled far and near, and the warmth and brightness of Christianity spreading in its place. Almost wherever he came, flourishing Christian communities sprang up. Numerous bishops watched over the flocks intrusted to them. The erection of the bishopric of Mayence into the metropolitan see of Germany formed a strong bond of union between the several dioceses, and secured to German Christianity an indispensable condition of prosperity, close intercourse and intimate relationship namely, with the Apostolic See. The political union of Germany was in great part brought about through the exertions of Boniface; and to whatever power, fame, and honour, our nation has since attained, for them also she owes the deepest gratitude to her apostle.

The unwearied zeal of Boniface now made him wish to end his life as a missionary among the Friesians, who still obstinately resisted the Christian faith. In virtue of the plenary jurisdiction which he had received, he transferred the archbishopric of Mayence to his disciple Lullus, and himself took instead that of Utrecht. That he might be ready to live or die with a light and joyful heart, he recommended his former fellow-labourers, in consideration of their defenceless condition, to the favour and protection of Pepin. Having set everything in order, he took a sorrowful farewell of all his friends. He begged Lullus, besides the books which he had given him, to give him also a shroud. Then he set forth on his journey, his hair whitened by age, but his heroic soul yet burning with youthful zeal to gather in this his last harvest for the garner of his Lord. Travelling through Friesland with several companions, he administered the sacraments of baptism and confirmation to thousands, destroyed the idol altars, and built Christian churches in their stead. Thus labouring he reached the neighbourhood of the modern town of Dockum in the beginning of June 755. Here he pitched his tent, and waited to confirm the newly-baptized converts. But on the morning of the 5th of June, instead of the expected band of pious Christians, a troop of savage Pagans came down upon them. On the exhortation of Boniface to suffer willingly for the love of Him who suffered so much for them, his companions, fifty-two in number, prepared themselves calmly and joyfully for death. The saint himself awaited the stroke that should free his holy soul from its mortal prison, standing with the book of the Gospels raised above his head in token that it was for the Gospel that he died. The murderers rushed into the tents eager for plunder, but finding only books and relics, they fell into a rage and massacred the whole band. The body of St. Boniface was taken first to Utrecht, where the people desired at any price to keep so great a treasure; but a sign from heaven compelled them to desist, and give it up to the messengers who came from Mayence to receive

it. The inhabitants of Mayence too, would have kept it, but an apparition of the saint forbade their doing so. The sacred relics therefore, were borne in solemn procession to Fulda, and there deposited as Boniface had desired, near the altar of the Blessed Virgin. His tomb, where many miracles were wrought, was constantly visited by numbers of the faithful, and kings and emperors came to do it honour.

“Whenever the missionaries had obtained a firm footing in any country, their first care was to found one or more monasteries. These scattered abroad the seeds of Christianity, formed schools for the education of the younger clergy, and everywhere introduced milder manners and a love of peaceful occupations. It was thus that the rude Germans learned husbandry, handicrafts, and the arts of domestic life. By the industry of the monks waste lands became fruitful fields, and gloomy woods were converted into cheerful townships. In every way the monks were the benefactors of mankind.”

Not content with having borne the Gospel message to the heathen amid toil and danger, the zealous missionaries sought to secure the future wellbeing of their converts by the firm establishment of Christianity among them. For this end, as we have already seen, they built monasteries in suitable places, and filled them with pious monks, whose duty it was to foster the seed that had been sown, to accustom the warlike and rapacious natives to a peaceful and industrious life, to encourage them by word and example to persevere in striving after Christian virtue, and, above all, to carry on the work of conversion among the yet heathen tribes. And how well did the monasteries fulfil their office during those rude and barbarous centuries! The monks in their cloisters, by universal prayer, by the giving of comfort, counsel, and instruction, vied in working for their neighbours' good with those others, who in a life of active sacrifice, went forth to seek out and convert the heathen from far and near, and to establish the converts in the faith. Whilst without, nothing was often to be heard but the din of war, the monks in their quiet cells, took care for the spiritual and eternal needs of mankind. They zealously fostered learning, both sacred and secular. They established schools, where the sons of the natives both high and low, often those of princes and kings,

were brought up for their callings whether in the world or the Church, in Christian virtue and piety. And thus the cloister grew to be a seminary, whence continually came forth devout monks filled with God's Spirit, and true Christian men well taught in all things needful, who afterwards used their influence for the spread of the faith and advancement of the Christian life.

But whilst the good monks laboured with such zeal to supply men's spiritual needs, they did not forget their temporal welfare. The monasteries were always, and especially in times of trouble, the refuges of the poor and afflicted. It was the monasteries that called into being so many charitable institutions for the care of the sick and the relief of the needy. It was the monks who were the most vigorous and successful defenders of the weak from the oppression of the powerful. It was they who helped to soften the hard lot of the serf, and who freed humble toil from the stamp of shame which had been attached to it by heathen pride. The monks it was, who in so many places turned the forests into cornlands, drained the swamps and marshes, and in their place covered Germany with meadows, fruitful fields, and blooming gardens. What had before happened in Pontus in the time of St. Basil was now repeated in the countries of the North. Where before there had only been wild forests and barren plains, there now appeared a well-peopled and smiling country. Village after village sprung up about the monasteries, and on the heights and in the valleys farms and hamlets arose. Such settlements often grew into flourishing towns. Thus it is to insignificant monasteries that the cities, for instance, of St. Gall, Glarus, Fulda, Fritzlar, &c., owe their origin. In all too relating to the spread of arts and manufactures, the much-abused monks have won for themselves immortal merit. We owe to them both new discoveries and the preservation and transmission of the skill of earlier ages. Around the small monastic buildings which afterwards grew into great abbeys, other buildings arose, the scenes of the most active industry. These were the artisans'

workshops. With equal skill and diligence the good brothers handled the various tools, from the ponderous axe and hammer, to the sculptor's chisel, and the fine brush of the painter. Here the sons of the poor found useful employment, and the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the inventions of civilised nations. Together with Christian manners, useful knowledge was diffused, and all the benefits of an already advanced culture. We may thus well say that by the missionaries and the monasteries all the sources both of temporal and eternal wellbeing were opened. It was with no sparing hand that the sons of St. Benedict, whom we have seen so zealously discharging their great task, scattered abroad the graces and blessings of Christianity. The one aim to which they devoted themselves in their lives and works was the earthly and heavenly happiness of our forefathers.

Though all the monasteries exerted a most beneficial influence each in its own neighbourhood, the especial good which was effected by some in particular amongst them, deserves separate mention. Pre-eminent amongst other schools of learning in the south of Germany, was the abbey of St. Gall, of which we have before spoken. The monks here distinguished themselves as well by their skill in the arts and sciences and in the education of the young, as by their services in spreading the Christian faith. They laboured with unwearied diligence in transcribing and translating the writings of the ancient Greek and Roman authors, as well as of the fathers of the Church; thus preserving these priceless treasures to posterity. They made fine white parchment from the skins of beasts. They ornamented their manuscripts with artfully painted capitals, beautifully adorned with flowers, and illuminated often with gold and silver. When, after indescribable toil, a book had been thus completed, it was bound in oaken boards, often covered with ivory and precious metals, and preserved as a valued treasure. Music and poetry too, here reached a high perfection. It is said in the life of St. Notker, who died A.D. 912, that "God granted him the gift of singing the divine praises for the edification of the faithful." Thirteen desks stood in the choir, with as many splendid psalters emblazoned with gold and silver. The school was presided over by celebrated teachers, such as Iso, the famous physician; Ratbert (died 897); Tutilo, a great poet and distinguished in all the arts (died 912); the three Notkers, several Eckchards, and others. Neither were virtue and piety absent in St. Gall. The

great bishop of Augsburg, St. Adalbert, uncle to his successor, St. Ulric, came on a pilgrimage to the tomb of St. Gall in the year 907, and when taking leave said to the abbot, "I sought but one saint, and him among the dead; but I have found among the living patterns of every virtue. Your works bear witness as well to your sanctity as to your learning."

In Central Germany the convent of Fulda was most famous, and with good reason, it being the foundation which was specially dear to St. Boniface himself. In the year 744 St. Boniface conferred his archiepiscopal blessing upon his beloved disciple Sturm, whom he commissioned to seek a suitable place for building a monastery in the great forest of Buchonia. Sturm set off and crossed the river Fulda in a boat, but not finding any place fitted for the purpose, he returned to St. Boniface and told him of his ill success. The saint however, in a prophetic manner, commanded him to seek again for the place which God had prepared for His servants in that wilderness. Full of confidence in the words of the holy bishop, and committing himself to our Lord's protection, Sturm accordingly saddled his ass and traversed the savage waste, overgrown with primeval forests and filled with wild beasts. He sought carefully by hill and dale, crossed rivers and brooks, but could not discover the place. Without knowing it, however, he had already passed the site of the future monastery. Whilst he was thus wandering in uncertainty through the forest, God so ordered it that he met a man on horseback, who gave him precise information about the neighbourhood. Thereupon the saint went back a short way and came to the spot where the convent was afterwards built. On examining the place to see if it was a fit site for a monastery, it seemed to him as St. Giles tells us, entirely perfect, and it became quite clear and evident to his mind that this was the spot that God had chosen for His servants. He joyfully carried the news to St. Boniface, and the latter, going to the court of the Frankish mayor of the palace Carloman, requested the place thus found as a gift. Carloman immediately complied, and made over the place, with the land about it within a radius of one mile, to the servants of God for ever. Sturm and his companions began by building several cells, with a chapel hard by. Before long St. Boniface himself came, and buildings were begun of a regular monastery and a fine church. The brethren under Sturm's direction followed the Benedictine rule, and so quickly did the foundation grow, that in the lifetime of the first abbot there were there about four hundred monks. For a long time they had to contend with bitter poverty, shut in as they were on all sides by swamps and forests. Through persevering industry, however, they succeeded in forming many settlements, which grew into villages surrounded with fruitful

fields and meadows. Fulda accomplished much, both for the salvation of souls and the spread of Christian learning. The monks went forth in bands, with their abbot, St. Sturm, at their head, to convert the neighbouring heathen tribes. Great numbers of them accompanied the Emperor Charlemagne when he invaded the territory of the fierce Saxons. "The monastery of Fulda," says an old chronicle, "was at the height of its glory under Abbot Rhabanus Maurus" (who died Archbishop of Mayence in the year 856), "and the fame of it was spread over all Europe. Emperors, kings, and princes, sounded the praises of the monks of Fulda, not only for the holiness of their lives, but for that incomparable knowledge of the Scriptures by which they were distinguished." Fulda shed abroad the light of its sanctity and learning by means of the many scholars who flocked thither from foreign monasteries and distant lands to draw knowledge from this famous spring, and who came forth afterwards as statesmen, abbots, and bishops, to impart to others the spiritual treasures they had gained there.

Of equal importance to Northern Germany was the monastery of Neu Korvey on the Weser, the celebrated off-shoot from Alt-Korvey (Corbie) in Picardy, established in the year 823 by the Abbot Adelhard. It was, in the words of an old chronicler, "the head and mother of all other monasteries, the glory of its country, the marvel of Saxony, and of all Germany." Here too did the sounds of toil mingle with those of holy psalmody; here too a famous school flourished, and thence apostolic missionaries went forth into all parts of Germany, penetrating even to the shores of the Northern and Baltic Seas.

It was there too, that the great Apostle of the North St. Ansharius, began his glorious career. With immense toil and amidst great dangers he established Christianity in Sweden and Denmark. As Archbishop of Hamburg, to which see he afterwards united that of Bremen, and apostolic legate for the north, he was unceasingly occupied in shielding the work of conversion from the attacks made upon it on all sides. For this end no task was too hard for him and no sacrifice too great; nothing could daunt his courage or shake his confidence in God. In the year 845 Hamburg was destroyed by northern pirates, and St. Ansharius forced to wander as a fugitive. But calm and undismayed, he continued his work without ceasing. He went repeatedly to Denmark and Sweden to control the stubbornness of the

heathen and protect from danger the Christian faith. After having long enlightened the world by the brightness of his virtues, and accomplished great and glorious deeds for the welfare of the northern nations, he died a holy death in the year 865, lamenting only that it should not have fallen to his lot to obtain the crown of martyrdom. In Denmark and Sweden however, the struggle of the Church with Paganism was not of long continuance, as Christianity gained a decisive victory in Denmark under Canute the Great, in the middle of the eleventh, and in Sweden under St. Eric, in the middle of the twelfth century.

The Emperor Charlemagne, who had much at heart the spread and welfare of the Christian Church, founded, besides bishoprics, more than twenty-four monasteries, which he endowed liberally with lands and goods. His example was followed by the pious King Stephen, to whom Hungary owes its conversion.

The seeds of happiness and prosperity sown among these barbarous nations by the preachers of the faith, by the dispensation of Divine wisdom and mercy attained their full development. In this we are the more bound to recognise thankfully the workings of God's providence, since at the time of which we are speaking, many and great dangers threatened the then nascent faith with destruction. The Frankish kingdom, which from its central position in Europe, was naturally the guardian and refuge of Christendom, was surrounded on all sides by fierce and powerful enemies—Pagans and Mahometans, whose aim in their ceaseless incursions was to throw back the young Christian nations into hopeless confusion. In this need Divine Providence raised up in France, in the beginning of the eighth century, a race of princes, who, to pious and faithful hearts, united great power, together with wisdom, prudence, and unshaken courage. With the rise of these men began that beautiful co-operation of Church and State in promoting the true welfare of the people, by means of which our country was enriched internally with peace and prosperity, and externally adorned with glory and power.

Pepin of Heristal and Charles Martel already had willingly given their support to the missionaries of the faith, and acquired for themselves great merit in thus promoting the spread of Christianity.

Pepin Le Bref, who was raised to the throne by the choice of the Franks, and with the approbation of the Roman See, in the

place of the last of the Merovingian "Rois fainéants," took on himself the defence of the Church, in Germany as in Italy, by protecting Pope Stephen II. against the tyranny of the Lombard king Astolph, on which occasion, in order to secure freedom of action to the Holy Father, he laid the foundation of the temporal power by a deed, making over for ever the conquered territory to the Roman Church.* The singleness of his intention in making this gift is proved by his reply to the ambassador of the Emperor of the East, who claimed the lands in question for his sovereign. "It is not for the Emperor," said he, "that I have done battle twice, but in honour of St. Peter, and for the forgiveness of my sins. What I have once offered to St. Peter must remain his, and not for all the treasures of the world would I break my word and oath."

But most powerful of all, was Pepin's famous son Charlemagne. In the course of fifty-three campaigns he in part united and in part made subject the hostile nations around him to the German sceptre. To the huge empire thus formed, embracing men so various in speech, manners, and customs, he gave a lasting and serviceable political constitution. He immensely promoted the wellbeing of his subjects, and above all, as a pious and energetic protector of the Church, furnished a bright example to after ages. What makes this prince however especially great and admirable in our eyes, is his true and Christian apprehension of the dignity of the kingly office. He consecrated his great power, his intelligence, his gift of government, and his heroic courage, to a higher end than the mere administration of temporal goods. He clearly perceived that as a Christian king, he was called by God to co-operate with the Church, not only in promoting the earthly welfare of his people, but in aiding them, so far as he was able, in

* When Pope Stephen II. came to France in 753, to beg protection and help from Pepin, this great prince had him solemnly welcomed at the frontier. He sent his son Charles, with many of his nobles, a long way to meet him, and accompany him as a guard of honour. He himself, on the feast of the Epiphany, went forth a distance of three miles to receive his honoured guest. On coming within sight of him, he dismounted from his horse, and knelt down with his wife Bertrada, and his sons and nobles, on the bare earth, to receive his apostolic benediction. He held the Pope's stirrup also, and walked beside his horse for some distance like a servant. This evidences that the high position held by the Popes in the Middle Ages was due, not to their own ambition, but to their sacred character, which all gladly recognised.

their endeavours after their higher and supernatural welfare. He thus expresses himself in a letter written in the year 755 to Pope Leo III.: "It is my duty," he says, "with the help of the divine mercy, everywhere to defend the holy Church of Christ against the attacks of heathens and the devastation of unbelievers, without by arms, and within by confession of the faith." Charlemagne underwent almost superhuman labours in the dreadful thirty-three years' war which he was forced to wage against the proud, powerful, and stubborn Saxons. It was a war not undertaken, like many others, from ambition or greed, but for the defence of his oppressed and ill-treated subjects. The barbarians continually rushed down upon his territory, burning all before them. And however solemnly they might swear when defeated to keep peace, the Emperor was no sooner gone than they returned to perpetrate fresh outrages. Amid his political aims he did not lose sight of religious ones. When he had overcome his enemies, his first thought was to extend to them the benefits of Christianity. Bishops and missionaries always accompanied him to instruct the heathen in the faith and give them holy baptism. As soon as the conversion of the two most obstinate of the leaders, Alboin and Wittekind, had secured in some measure the continuance of peace in Saxony, he erected, with the approval of the Holy See, the eight bishoprics of Hatherstadt, Verden, Bremen, Hildesheim, Paderborn, Minden, Osnabrück, and Münster, endowed them liberally, and took care that they were filled by worthy pastors. Among these the most illustrious was St. Ludger, first bishop of Münster. When raised against his own will to the episcopate, in the year 802, he had already preached the Gospel with much fruit in Friesland and Saxony, and also founded the great monastery of Werden on the Ruhr. He adorned the see of Münster for seven years by the holiness of his life and his apostolic zeal.

Far from Charlemagne was the narrow spirit which seeks, from jealousy, to thwart the Church's influence. He, on the contrary, strove in every way to uphold and strengthen it.

In the imperial diet the most influential voices were those of bishops and abbots, inasmuch as they excelled all others in wisdom and learning. Charlemagne also instituted frequent synods, at which salutary laws were passed for the maintenance of Church discipline, and for the rooting out of heresies and superstitious customs. He was careful to provide the people with worthy pastors, and showed special favour to the monasteries. Of these there were more than four and twenty, which he had in part founded, in part enlarged, and endowed with princely liberality. He was most zealous too, in promoting the study of art and science throughout his wide dominions. Schools were attached to all monasteries and cathedrals for the education of men for the ecclesiastical state, and for the higher secular dignities. Even in the country too, many schools were to be found. He invited learned men from all parts to his court, and took much pleasure in conversing with them upon religious and scientific subjects. Amongst these, the most celebrated were Alcuin, a learned and pious Englishman; Paul the deacon, a Lombard; Einhard the historian, and St. Benedict of Anian, who revived the fervour of the monastic life in many places. Many churches owe their foundation to Charlemagne. Especially splendid was the Church of Our Lady at Aix-la-Chapelle, the pillars and marble for which he had brought from Italy. He provided that careful copies should be made of the Holy Scriptures, and took care for the harmony of the church music, and for the dignity and splendour of the divine offices. He sought the church morning and evening, and often even assisted also at the midnight office. He was scrupulous in observing the Church's fasts, and shamed his courtiers from empty show by his own simplicity. It was only on solemn occasions that he appeared with royal pomp. His charity was not bounded by the limits of his empire; his beneficent deeds extended to Africa and Asia also. His pious rule was accompanied with and supported by his filial veneration for Christ's Vicar on earth. He went four times to Rome, and twice had the happiness of receiving the Holy Father in

Germany. When he, the great general, was in Rome for the first time, in the year 774, he ascended the steps at the foot of the portico of St. Peter's on his knees, kissing each reverently, since they had been touched and consecrated by the feet of so many saints. On this same occasion he confirmed and increased the grant which had been made by Pepin to the Holy See.

We have already seen that the Holy See often called in the aid of Christian princes against the oppression of powerful foes. It would clearly therefore, be for the advantage of the Church, that some pious and powerful prince should stand ever ready to fulfil the office of her earthly protector. To choose such a protector was the province of the Church herself, and what other Christian sovereign could have appeared so fit for this vocation as Charles the Great, who had already fulfilled its duties so perfectly? He it was then, who was first called to this high dignity. He, the ruler of almost all the West, was chosen by Christ's Vicar to be the protector of Western Christendom; and to add yet greater dignity to his office he was invested with the imperial crown of Rome. On the Christmas Day of the year 800 Charlemagne assisted at the midnight mass, celebrated in St. Peter's by Pope Leo III. He reverently knelt absorbed in prayer, at the foot of the altar till towards the end of the ceremony, when the Pope, attended by twelve bishops, approached him and placed a golden crown upon his head. The joyful shouts of the assembled multitude re-echoed through the sacred building. "Health and victory," they cried, "to Charles Augustus, crowned of God, the great and pacific Emperor of the Romans!" He then received the holy unction from the Pope, and promised, as supreme temporal ruler, to regard the protection of Christ's Church as the highest duty of his new office. Taking on himself as emperor, new duties, he received from his subjects renewed homage. The Franks and all the other nations under his rule again swore to him as emperor their oaths of fealty. He was now on the topmost pinnacle of his fame. His bravery and piety had raised him

to be the temporal head of Western Christendom. His name resounded throughout all lands. His enemies were humbled; ambassadors came from all parts with presents and letters of congratulation; even the mighty Caliph Haroun Alraschid sought his friendship, sent him costly gifts, and delivered to him the keys of the Holy Sepulchre, saying that he might visit it as though it were within his own dominions. After having reigned gloriously for forty-seven years, and ordered public affairs to the last with the greatest wisdom and prudence, he fell calmly asleep on the 28th of January 814, saying, in the words of his dying Lord, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit." He was buried in the cathedral at Aix-la-Chapelle. The body, clothed in imperial robes and girded with his sword, was placed sitting on a golden throne; the crown was on his head, the Book of the Gospels on his knee, at his side the pilgrim's wallet which he had been wont to carry on his journeys to Rome, while at his feet were laid the golden sceptre and shield which Pope Leo had blessed.

With the reign of Charlemagne a new and admirable order came into being. At the head of Western Christianity stood two men anointed by God. The Holy Father, chosen by Him to wield the spiritual power and the spiritual sword for the good of mankind, and the new Roman Emperor, elected freely by the Pope to control the froward and unbelieving by means of the temporal sword, and to support the Church in the discharge of her pastoral office. For this reason Charlemagne, in Christian enthusiasm, used to sign himself "the most humble shield and guardian of the Holy Church and of the Apostolic Roman Sec." The believing spirit of the Middle Ages regarded the mutual relations of these two powers as possessing a deep significance, and compared them to the sun and moon; the Pope, as the spiritual and supernatural ruler being looked on as typified by the sun, and the Emperor by the moon. How wise and serviceable was this intimate relationship between the spiritual and temporal powers the history of the following centuries abun-

dantly proves. Wherever this relationship was recognised and respected there the blessing of God rested upon the people, there the Christian life, and art and science also, flourished; and Germany, which was the seat of the empire from the middle of the tenth century, was maintained on the summit of power and glory. From want of protectors who were faithful to their vocation, the Church was in a deplorable condition during the end of the ninth and the first half of the tenth century. But with the rule of the Saxon emperors, especially of Otto the Great (died 973) and St. Heinrich (died 1024), a happy star arose for Germany and all Christendom. Rich in great deeds, in heroic virtue, and in splendid foundations, were those days, when all were united in one faith and in one endeavour for the exaltation of the Catholic Church.

We can but refer briefly to the conversion of the many heathen tribes, which in the course of time, became closely connected with Germany. Two brothers, the Greek monks Cyril and Methodius, preached the Gospel in Moravia about the middle of the ninth century. They invented a Slavonian alphabet, and translated the Holy Scriptures into Slavonian. Their orthodoxy was examined and approved by Pope Adrian II., and St. Methodius was nominated Archbishop of Moravia. In the year 845 fourteen Bohemian nobles were baptized at Ratisbon with their families, and returned to their own country, accompanied by priests. Later, in 874, St. Methodius converted Borziwoy, Duke of Bohemia, with his wife St. Ludmilla, who afterwards, in the year 926, was put to death for the faith by her heathen daughter-in-law, Drahomira. St. Wenceslaus, grandson of St. Ludmilla, who as duke, had zealously protected Christianity, and was distinguished for the highest virtues, also obtained the crown of martyrdom, being murdered by his brother, Boleslas I., out of hatred to the Christian name. Under Boleslas II., surnamed "the Good," Christianity completely triumphed. The reign of this prince was a glorious one. He overcame his enemies without and within, and provided wisely for the wellbeing and the salvation of his people. Through the foundation of the archbishopric of Prague, Bohemia received a settled ecclesiastical constitution in the year 973. The Emperor, Otto the Great, did much for the conversion of the Slavonians in Meissen, Altmark, and Lusatia. He sent missionaries to them, and founded, with the approval of Pope John XIII., the

metropolitan see of Magdeburg, with the bishoprics of Zeiz, Merseburg, Meissen, Havelberg, Brandenburg, and Posen. A Christian princess of Bohemia, the sister of Duke Boleslas the Good, who was married to Minceslas I. of Poland, converted this prince, and thus the Poles also were brought into the Church. When, in the year 1000, the Emperor Otto III. piously visited the tomb of his friend St. Adalbert, at Gnesen, the powerful Duke Boleslas Chrobry, who had received from the Emperor the title of king, founded an archbishopric in that city, with the suffragan sees of Kolberg, Cracow, and Breslau. In the middle of the eleventh century Casimir I. came to the throne, and raised Christianity to great glory throughout his kingdom.

The day of grace too, came at last for Hungary, which had long been the scourge of her neighbours, especially of Germany, inflicting on them all the horrors of savage warfare. Pilgrim, Bishop of Passau, had laboured with much fruit there during the reign of Otto the Great; and Duke Geisa was led to embrace Christianity by his Christian wife Sarolta. But it was not till the reign of his own son St. Stephen, who was baptized by St. Adalbert, Archbishop of Prague, and grew up in every virtue, that Christianity completely triumphed. The love which this prince bore to his people gave him no rest until he had provided securely for their salvation. To this end he sent for many missionaries, built schools, parish churches, and convents, entered into close alliance with Pope Sylvester II., and placed his whole dukedom unreservedly at his disposal. Rejoiced at the zeal of this noble prince, Sylvester returned the territory intact, to be held as a fief of the Holy See, raised him to the kingly dignity, and presented him with a golden crown. He conferred on him also the powers of Papal legate for Hungary, with the privilege of having a cross borne before him on all solemn occasions; and further gave him the title of "apostolic," in recognition of the zeal with which he had laboured for the spread of the faith. The archbishopric of Gran was now established, together with ten suffragan sees. It was by St. Stephen that the famous Benedictine abbey of Martinsburg was founded. A school was here kept by the monks, at which were brought up very many of the bishops, missionaries, saints, and doctors, who adorned the Church of Hungary. St. Stephen reigned well and wisely for forty years, ever labouring indefatigably for the good of his people, and striving to substitute for their hereditary barbarism a true Christian civilisation. He died in the year 1038.

In 1124 Otto Bishop of Bamberg, went to Pomerania, and won for himself eternal merit by his labours for the conversion of the people. They were specially blessed in the flourishing cities of Stettin and Julin. The inhabitants of Holstein and Mecklenburg

were soon after brought into the Church by the influence of some of the German princes. The heathen Prussians on the Baltic Sea strove the longest of all against the introduction of Christianity. These fanatical idolaters murdered St. Adalbert, Bishop of Prague, when he went among them in the year 997. His relics were solemnly interred at Gnesen, and the fame of the saint was spread abroad by the miracles which they wrought. In the year 1009 St. Bruno also suffered martyrdom in his attempt to bring to Prussia the light of faith. Indeed as late as the thirteenth century, when the Church had everywhere else triumphed gloriously, we still see the Prussians clinging fast to Paganism, and it was only after a prolonged and fierce struggle that they at last entered the fold of Christ.

SECTION XXXIX.

ENTHRALMENT OF THE CHURCH BY THE GREEK EMPERORS—THE
 ICONOCLASTS — SCHISM OF THE GREEK CHURCH BEGUN BY
 PHOTIUS AND COMPLETED BY MICHAEL CERULARIUS—MAHOME-
 TANISM—FURTHER FATE OF THE SCHISMATIC GREEK CHURCH.

“Whilst Christianity, with the most blessed results, was spreading everywhere throughout the West, a pernicious confusion had arisen in the East. The Greek emperors, instead of submitting themselves to the Church, desired to govern her, and endeavoured to enforce their own opinions on her as articles of faith. The people were frivolous, and the clergy, for the most part, forgetful of their duties; pride and dissension did the rest in bringing about that deplorable schism through which the greater part of the Greek or Eastern Church became separated from the communion of the Supreme Pontiff.”

LEAVING Western Christianity in all the splendour of its vigorous life and growth, let us turn for a while to the East, where the Church is bleeding from a thousand wounds and consuming her own strength in a slow decline. Severe blows had indeed been dealt her by the various heresies of the preceding centuries. Arianism had shaken her to her very foundations, and the Nestorians and Eutychians also had done immense harm. But in the great general councils a powerful remedy for these evils had been provided. And would the Eastern Church but have preserved herself in

intimate communion with the See of Rome, the true refuge and defence of Christendom, she would have rivalled the West in developing the perfection of the Christian life, and a happier lot would have been hers. But the desire which possessed many of the Greek emperors to ignore the authority of the popes, and to impose their own instead in matters of faith, and the manner in which they hampered and enthralled the bishops, instead of protecting them in the free discharge of their office, were productive in the East of the most lamentable confusion, and paved the way for a total separation from the Apostolic See. So early as the year 355, Constantius, the son of Constantine the Great, had ventured to address the bishops assembled at Milan for the condemnation of Arianism, with the words, "My will shall be the Church's law. Choose if you will obey or be banished from your sees." And on this principle it was that many of the succeeding emperors undertook to rule the Eastern Church.

The Emperors Zeno and Anastasius I. believed themselves called on to settle the differences of the Eutychians by their own arbitration. The Emperors Heraclius and Constans II. again left no means untried to impose their decisions with regard to the Monothelite controversy, as binding on the whole Church. An emperor would assemble bishops ostensibly to give counsel, but whoever should differ from him in opinion expiated his fidelity by disgrace, banishment, and often even by torture and death. Idle and worthless favourites were introduced into the sees of the exiled prelates, who like Judas, sold their flocks for money. The popes continually raised their voices, now warning and entreating, and now in grave reproof. With the dignity of his apostolic office, Pope St. Symmachus wrote to the Emperor Anastasius I.:—"Dost thou think because thou art an emperor thou canst despise the divine sentence or rebel against the sway of Peter?" But a spirit of pride ruled in Byzantium. Often the firmness of the popes did but drive the emperors to fury. Constans II. revenged himself with fiendish cruelty on the resolute Pope Martin I. (p. 295),

and Pope St. Sergius I. was only saved from imprisonment by the firm loyalty of the Roman people.

Imperial tyranny in matters of faith became ever more intolerable. Many of the emperors had already protected heretics, but Leo the Isaurian placed himself at the head of a heresy of his own. A rude barbarian, risen from the ranks to the imperial purple, he yet took upon himself to bring against the whole Church, with all her popes and her bishops, an accusation of the grossest idolatry, because they honoured the images of Christ and the saints. In vain did the whole Christian people rise up against this new teaching. St. Germanus, Patriarch of Constantinople, boldly opposed it; St. John Damascene protested against it with all the ardour of his fiery zeal; Popes Gregory II. and Gregory III. gave solemn denial to the charge that the Church had for centuries practised and sanctioned idolatry, and a synod held at Rome in 732 by Gregory III. anathematised all who denied the veneration due to images.

All however was in vain. Leo published a new edict, according to which all pictures of saints, and all statues and crucifixes, were to be removed from churches and private houses. To the great scandal of the faithful, the images were burned in the public square, and the walls, which had been painted with figures, were whitewashed. A great crucifix, the monument of a brilliant victory, which adorned the entrance of the imperial palace was roughly hewn to pieces with an axe; even the valuable imperial library was given up to the flames, and those teachers of science who would not submit to the Emperor's opinions shared a like fate. From 741 to 775, during the reign of Constantine Copronymus, the son and successor of Leo, the blood of those who continued to pay veneration to images was poured forth like water. Constantinople became the scene of the most atrocious cruelties. Of such as held faithfully to the Catholic teaching, some had their eyes put out, others their noses cut off, some were scourged to death, some sewed in sacks with stones and cast into the sea, and thousands more died in prison or in exile. The

tyrant turned the whole tide of his wrath against the monks, who were the boldest defenders of the truth. No insult, no torture, was spared them. Their beards were covered with pitch and set on fire, and wooden figures of the saints were broken against their heads. The Emperor took the greatest delight in these horrors. To hear them described was the conversation he liked best at table, and he often himself witnessed the torture of his victims. In his wantonness he proceeded even to dig the bodies of the saints out of their graves, to break the holy vessels, and to burn and pull down churches and convents. To give some appearance of reason to his wild violence he called a synod at Constantinople in 754. No patriarch attended, but the three hundred and thirty-eight bishops who had been collected together from the East were weak enough to confirm and even to explain the law against image veneration, saying "that as God had formerly sent the apostles to annihilate idolatry, He had now raised up the Greek emperors and filled them with His wisdom, that by their means we might be instructed, and the devil's invention (the honouring of images) rooted out."

The persecution continued under Leo IV., the son and successor of Leo the Isaurian, but at his death it was put an end to by his wife the Empress Irene, who held the reins of government during the minority of her son Constantine VI. With the concurrence of Pope Adrian I., and presided over by a Papal legate, the seventh general council was held at Nicæa in the year 787. Three hundred and seventy-seven bishops were present. After the lawfulness of the honour paid to images had been sufficiently shown from Holy Scripture and tradition, the assembled fathers gave sentence—"That, besides representations of the Holy Cross, holy images are fitly to be placed in churches, on sacred vessels, on vestments, walls, and tablets, in houses and by the wayside,—such images to wit, as those of our Lord, of the Immaculate Mother of God, of the holy angels, and of the saints. The more men contemplate such images, the more will they be put in mind of the originals, and stirred up

to imitate their examples, and to offer them their salutations and homage, though not that worship properly so-called which belongs to God alone. It is lawful that images, as well as the Holy Cross, the book of the Gospels, and other holy things, should be honoured with incense and lights, according to the ancient pious usage; for honour paid to an image passes on to its original, and whoso venerates the image venerates him whom it represents." The joy of the Catholics was great at this restoration of peace, but great again was their consternation when the strife was reopened, and the faithful persecuted afresh, first in 814 by the rough soldier-emperor Leo the Armenian, and after him by Michael Palæologus in 820, and his son Theophilus in 829. The Empress Theodora at length put an end to the disturbance in 842. A synod was held in Constantinople which adhered to the decisions of the last general council, and a special feast was instituted to commemorate the restoration of the images.

Though during this persecution, which lasted more than a century, the faith of many suffered shipwreck, the number of those also was very great who obtained the palm of martyrdom. Among these happy souls one of the most famous was the Abbot Stephen, of whose confession and holy death we will here give the particulars. He was a man held in much consideration, both on account of his great learning and for the austerity and holiness of his life, and for this reason Constantine Copronymus tried every means to win him over to his own party. Neither bribes nor threats proving however of any use, the Emperor resolved to at least deprive him of his influence, and to this end sought, by spreading slanders against him, to destroy his reputation. He then caused the monastery on the Mount of St. Auxentius, where the saint lived, to be burned, and the church to be pulled down, and sent Stephen himself in chains to a monastery in the little city of Chrysopolis (A.D. 761). Here he was urged by several of the iconoclast bishops to sign the decrees of the pseudo-synod of Constantinople, and was threatened if he refused with death, as a rebel against the fathers and the Emperor. "But how," Stephen fearlessly replied, "could I recognise the decrees of a council unsanctioned by the Bishop of Rome? Do you not know that the laws of the Church forbid the regulation of ecclesiastical affairs without his concurrence?" He spoke further of the unlawfulness of the proceedings, and, raising his voice boldly, anathematised

such as did not honour the Redeemer in His image. His enemies were forced with shame to confess their defeat to the Emperor, and the confessor was banished to a Greek island.

Here he lived during his exile in a cave, and fed upon herbs. His faithful monks soon gathered round their father. The people were eager to hear him, and he taught them and wrought many miracles. On hearing this, Constantine caused him to be brought back to Constantinople, and cast, bound with chains, into prison. After some days the Emperor sat in judgment, and Stephen appeared before him as a criminal. On the Emperor calling the veneration of images an impiety, the saint replied that it was not the material substance of the image that Christians honoured, but the person it represented. "Fool!" cried the Emperor, "do we dishonour Jesus Christ Himself when we trample His image under foot?" On this Stephen drew forth a coin and asked the Emperor whose effigy it bore? He answered, "Mine and that of my son." The saint threw the piece of money on the floor and trod upon it. Furious at the supposed insult to the imperial likeness, the servants rushed on Stephen eager for revenge, but he was led back to prison at the Emperor's command. After this Constantine charged some officials either to force the abbot to apostatise or to scourge him to death. But at the sight of the brave Christian they were filled with fear, and, falling trembling to the ground, they kissed his feet, and returned, having received his blessing. The Emperor, on hearing what had happened, was beside himself with rage that a weak monk should have greater power than himself over his subjects, and loudly cursed his fate that he could not get rid of this man. On this a savage mob, stirred up by some of the attendants of the court, rushed to the prison, and on their calling with great uproar for Abbot Stephen, he showed himself with calm dignity before them. They seized him and dragged him through the streets of the city in the most barbarous manner, beat and pelted him with sticks and stones, and he finally died torn in pieces by their hands. This happened about the year 764.

Notwithstanding the arrogance with which Constantinople had many times conducted herself towards the Roman See, there had as yet been no open and general breach between the Eastern and Western Churches. But the bonds so often and so painfully knit were destined at last to be completely torn asunder, and the truth of our Lord's words, "Who is not for Me is against Me," was again to be proved. The Greek schism places strikingly before our eyes the fate of such churches as supinely yield their rights and indepen-

dence, and submit willingly to State tyranny. In the year 857 the wicked Barolas, uncle to the reigning Emperor, who wielded an almost absolute power, and disregarded all laws human and divine, unjustly banished from his see, Ignatius the rightful patriarch of Constantinople, and placed in his stead the learned but worthless Photius. Such bishops as refused to recognise the intruder (who had received all the orders in six days from an excommunicated bishop) were deposed, imprisoned, and exiled.

Photius tried by cruel ill-treatment, to force the aged Ignatius to abdicate, and by a well-contrived fabrication endeavoured to obtain the support of Pope Nicholas I. When, however, this great Pope learned the true facts of the case from the imprisoned Ignatius, he assembled a synod in Rome in 864, by which Photius and all the bishops whom he had consecrated were deposed. Fired by ambition, Photius now threw off all concealments. He summoned the bishops of his own party, laid various charges against the Roman Church, among others that of heresy, because she taught that the Holy Ghost proceeded both from the Father and from the Son; and in his inconsiderate rage ended by anathematising the holy Father. Pope Nicholas, in a most powerful letter, exhorted the Emperor Michael III. to set bounds to the disorders of Photius, warning him that a fearful judgment would await him if the faithful were misled, and so many believers caused to swerve from the right path. It was not however till the reign of his successor, Basil the Macedonian, that Photius was banished to a monastery, and the much-tried St. Ignatius restored to his rights.

To remedy the evil brought about by Photius, the eighth general council was held in Constantinople, at the desire of the Emperor and St. Ignatius, and presided over by the legates of Pope Adrian. Photius, when called upon to answer for himself, having nothing to say in his own defence, excused his silence by the example of our Lord, who also was silent when accused. The fathers were filled with indignation at this blasphemous speech, and his guilt having

been fully proved, they cried unanimously, "Anathema on Photius, promoted through court favour! Anathema to the tyrant Photius, to the inventor of lies, to the new Judas! Anathema on all his followers and protectors! Everlasting glory to the most holy Roman Pope, Nicholas! Long life to Adrian, the holy Father in Rome!" At the next sitting of the council, a collection of spurious and falsified writings, together with the acts of the synod which Photius had held against Pope Nicholas, and which were filled with lies and invective and had forged signatures appended to them, were publicly burned in the church. But hardly had Ignatius died in the year 879, when the crafty Photius, who knew well how to ingratiate himself with the Emperor, reascended the ill-fated chair and began afresh his old courses. His rule did not last long. He was again deposed and banished to a monastery, where he died about the year 891. His death, however, in nowise healed the wounds which he had inflicted on the Eastern Church. His party survived him. He had filled most of the Greek sees with men of his own cast, and had illegally bestowed benefices on great numbers of priests. These all harboured a deep-seated dislike towards Rome, and only awaited a favourable opportunity to renew the breach with her. Thus that sectarian spirit which Photius had kindled continued to smoulder on like a spark beneath the ashes, and spread itself wider and wider, as well among the worst sort of the clergy as among the fickle and discontented population.

It was after all this that the patriarchs of Constantinople attempted to make themselves fully independent of the West. The splendour of the imperial city of Byzantium was a constant incitement to their desire for freedom, and they were certain for the most part of being supported in their endeavours by the emperors. As early as the time of Pope Gregory the Great, the patriarch John the Faster had taken on himself the title of "Œcumenical," or universal bishop, whilst Gregory, in apostolic humility, chose that of "Servant of the servants of God." It was in the middle of the eleventh

century that a complete separation was accomplished. The universally recognised precedence of the see of Peter was intolerable to the ambitious spirit of the patriarch Michael Cerularius. To aid him in casting off the hated yoke, he circulated like Photius, a document in which the Western Church was loaded with invective and all manner of accusations laid to her charge. The celibacy of the secular clergy, the use of unleavened bread for the holy sacrifice, fasting on Saturdays, the shaving of beards, the omission of the Alleluia in Lent, were all brought forward as causes of offence. These complaints were at once answered by Pope St. Leo IX., who tried, in a most eloquent letter, to bring the deluded patriarch to reason. He reminded him of the sanctity and inviolability of the unity of Christ's Church, the folly and presumption of his attempting to direct the successor of Peter, whom Christ had Himself confirmed in the faith, and pointed out to him with what ingratitude and contempt he was treating the Roman Church, the mother and guardian of all the churches. Lastly, he urged upon the patriarch to set aside discord and pride, and to allow divine mercy and peace to prevail instead of strife. But the paternal words were spoken in vain, and the legates also who were sent by the Pope to Constantinople were powerless to move the obduracy of the patriarch. He persistently refused all communication with them by speech or writing. Having therefore formally laid their complaints in the most distinct terms before the Emperor and senate, they proceeded to extremities. On the 16th of July 1054 they appeared in the church of St. Sophia at the beginning of divine service, and declared solemnly that all their endeavours to re-establish peace and union had been defeated by Cerularius. They then laid the bull of excommunication on the high altar and left the church, shaking, as they did so, the dust from off their feet, and exclaiming in the deepest grief, "God sees it; He will judge." Thus was the unhappy schism between the East and the West accomplished.

Who does not here recall the significant words spoken by our Lord when He wept over the blinded city of Jerusalem :

"If thou also hadst known, and that in this thy day, the things that are for thy peace" (Luke xix. 42)? There was still time for the approaching judgment to have been averted by a sincere reunion with the Christian West. For such a reunion the terrible blows dealt by a new enemy of the Christian name to the Greek Empire furnished an additional argument. But nothing would serve to quell the Greek pride. With wanton arrogance they pushed back the hand of reconciliation, and were forced in consequence to drink the cup of sorrow and shame to its very dregs.

"God did not delay the well-merited punishment. He now chastised the degenerate Christians as He had chastised the Israelites of old. In the beginning of the seventh century an impostor named Mahomet had arisen in Arabia, who gave himself out as a messenger from God, and pieced together a new religion from heathen Jewish and Christian sources. He began by placing himself at the head of a robber horde and plundering caravans. Later on he conquered cities and provinces, and forced his doctrines upon the inhabitants with the sword. Province after province in Asia and Africa was subjugated by the arms of his followers. Wherever they came they carried the teaching of the false prophet, slavery, and vice."

During the first half of the seventh century, whilst the disputes concerning the Monothelite heresy were nourishing the seeds of disunion within the bosom of the Eastern Church, an impostor had arisen in Arabia who had the skill to convert the poor dwellers in the deserts to the religion he had set up, to unite their hostile tribes and to render them the willing and enthusiastic agents of his ambitious schemes. The name of this man, who was destined to exercise so important an influence on the world's history, was Mahomet, or the "Praiseworthy." He was born in the year 570, at Mecca, in Arabia Petræa. During his mercantile journeys he acquired a superficial knowledge of Judaism and Christianity, which, aided by his lively fancy and poetical genius, fostered within him a natural tendency to religious enthusiasm. He withdrew himself gradually from his business, spent much of his time in a lonely cave, and at last, in his fortieth year, gave himself out as a prophet, who had been commissioned

by God to found a new religion. This religion he named that of "Islam," *i.e.*, "devotion to God," whence his followers are styled "Moslems" or Mussulmans ("dedicated to God").

The primary doctrines of this religion are: that there is only one God, and that Mahomet is His prophet. Round God's throne hover the angels, created before man out of pure fire. Everything, both good and evil, takes place according to the unalterable decrees of God, according to which many spirits and men have been created for hell. At the last day all the bodies of the dead will rise again, and all men will be judged. The wicked will have to walk across a bridge as narrow as the blade of a knife, and from thence fall down into hell, where fiery torments await them. The good will enter a paradise where they will repose on splendid couches, breathe the sweet scents of an eternal spring, feed on the most delicate meats, drink the sweetest drinks, and live plunged for ever in all sensual delights. None can attain this bliss except believers in Mahomet. Moses is a prophet, and Christ is a prophet, but Mahomet is superior to both. The Christians, according to him, adore three Gods: God the Father; Mary, his spouse; and Jesus, their Son. His rude apprehension could not entertain the idea of a divine Son without a divine mother. His religion was for the most part an admixture of Judaism, Christianity, and Paganism. His descent from Ismael led him to enjoin the Jewish rite of circumcision. He forbade too the use of swine's flesh of blood and of strangled animals, and that of wine and spirituous liquors. Alms, fasting, prayers and the pilgrimage to Mecca, he also commanded. The sensual heaven he described was taken from Pagan—for the most part Persian—sources, whilst many of his expressions regarding Jesus and Mary put us in mind of Christianity. Like all heathen religions, Islamism insists upon external observances, but lays no stress on interior sanctity. And though, in so far as it recognises the unity of the Godhead, it transcends other heathen religions, yet the two principal characteristics of Paganism, lust and cruelty, remain indelibly branded on it. Its founder

himself was a sensualist, who even in later life was unable to restrain his passions; and he not only allowed polygamy and licentious gratifications to his followers, but held them out as the reward which Paradise had in store for the labours of this life. He both revenged himself on his enemies by assassination, and allowed murder as vengeance, to his adherents. But the most meritorious work, the one which would most certainly lead to Paradise, was, he taught, the carrying on of an exterminating war against the infidels, against all such, that is to say, as would not accept his doctrine, and for whom his severity knew no bounds.

When Mahomet asserted, in 610, that the archangel Gabriel had appeared to him in a cave, and given him a divine commission to stand forth as a reformer and the founder of a creed, he found belief with none but a few of his nearest relations. And he earned only bitter mockery when, in 622, he related that he had been waked one night by the angel Gabriel, and carried from Mecca to the gate of the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, upon the celestial horse Elborak, and that from thence he had been borne aloft through the seven heavens, till he came within two bowshots of the throne of God, where he had beheld all creatures and all mysteries of the universe, and had received from God the most exalted revelations. He was forced in the same year to flee from Mecca to the neighbouring city of Medina, which was friendly to him. From thence he sought to make himself known to a wider circle in his character of a divinely inspired prophet. It is from this era of the *flight*, or *Hegira*, of Mahomet that time is reckoned according to the computation of his followers.

With regard to the reality of the divine commission to which Mahomet pretended, there can of course be no question. His commission was the sword. After his death miracles were indeed ascribed to him by his followers, but they rested on no evidence, and were discredited by their absurdity. A tree, for instance, was said to have come to meet him, stones to have saluted him, a beam of wood to have sighed after him; he was related to have split the moon by a movement of his hand, &c. But he him-

self, when requested as he often was to work miracles, always disclaimed the power of doing so. He appealed only to the alleged apparitions of the angel Gabriel and to the wisdom of his own numerous utterances, which he gave out for divine revelations, and which, as he could not himself read or write, his friends either wrote down on paper or committed to memory. These sentences were afterwards collected together, and, under the name of the "Koran," form the sacred book of the Mahometans. Whether or no Mahomet was, as some consider, himself deluded in the first instance into taking his dreams, or the illusions of Satan (who has the power of transforming himself into an angel of light), for real apparitions, still he must certainly be regarded in the main as not merely a false prophet, but as a base impostor, who owed his success to his power of subjugating and ruling men. The man indeed could be deserving of little credit who not only allowed himself in excesses which were unknown even among the Pagan Arabs, but endeavoured to justify them by blasphemously saying that they were expressly permitted or even commanded him by God. The rapid diffusion of his teaching proves nothing in his favour, but aids rather, owing to the means by which it was accomplished, in stamping him as a deceiver. No sooner did he feel himself strong enough to risk his bold undertaking, than he fell upon his enemies at the head of his troop of followers, plundered their caravans, conquered tribe after tribe, and at last gained possession of Mecca. In such a success there is nothing extraordinary; for the conquest of a feeble and disunited enemy, such as were then the Arabian tribes, would be a matter of but little difficulty to a body of men enthusiastically devoted to their leader, animated by the hope of booty, made callous to fear by a blind confidence in the decrees of fate, and by the expectation of being at once admitted in case of death to a paradise of sensual delights.

Though Mahomet may have at first thought of gaining his countrymen only, to his new creed, his ambition, when he saw himself at the head of a victorious army, became more widely extended, and he now felt himself called on to convert all nations. He addressed highflown letters to the King of Persia, the Greek Emperor Heraclius, and other princes, calling upon them to adopt his religion. His death, which occurred in the year 632, just as he was preparing to enter and devastate Syria, had no effect in checking the fatal flood which threatened to flow forth from Arabia over all other lands. His representatives the caliphs, who succeeded to his

authority, trod in his footsteps. Such were Abu Bekir. Omar I., Othman, Ali, &c. The new faith had been founded by the sword, and by the sword was to be maintained and spread. In a short time, not only Arabia and Syria together with Phœnicia and Palestine, but Egypt and Persia also, had become the prey of a horde of blood-thirsty fanatics. Many of the seaports on the north of Africa fell into their hands. Such Christians as were not slain were forced to pay heavy tribute, and were oppressed and trampled on beyond measure by their new masters, and woe to them if they should hinder any of their kin from embracing Islamism. A Christian could not dare to speak of his religion to a Mahometan, for in any way to impugn or find fault with Islamism was a capital crime. It is impossible to describe the devastation and misery which these conquering tribes everywhere brought with them. They burned churches and monasteries without number and slew the faithful monks and priests. No obstacle could stop their progress. From the starving beggars they had been before, they soon became insatiable robbers, whom the treasures of half a world could scarcely suffice; and they joined the most unbridled pride and luxury to their native ignorance and barbarism. These last were so great that they threw the splendid library of Ctesiphon the capital of Persia into the Tigris, and gave that of Alexandria to the flames.

When the first heat of their religious zeal had somewhat cooled, they became however divided into various sects and parties which carried on a deadly warfare among themselves, thus offering opportunities which, had it not been for the thorough rottenness of the Byzantine State and the weakening of Eastern Christendom through sectarian hatred, might have been repeatedly taken advantage of to drive these proud sons of Arabia back to their deserts. But jealousy, internal dissension, base cowardice, and too often treachery on the part of unworthy Christians, left free access on all sides to the enemy, who advanced with resistless force. Soon all the islands of the Mediterranean and nearly the whole of Spain

were in their hands, and from thence they poured forth their hordes upon the Frankish empire. Here, however, Islamism encountered a barrier which checked its hitherto victorious course. At Tours in the year 732, Charles Martel, at the head of the Frankish army, met Abderrahman with his countless Arab hosts. It was with vain rage, however, that they flung themselves on Charles's mailclad ranks. Hundreds of thousands were left, with their leader, dead on the field of battle, and the camp with its immense treasures fell into the hands of the Christians. Had not Charles Martel thus providentially crushed their power, all Christian Europe would probably have lain at the mercy of the Moslems.

If slavery, murder, oppression and misery everywhere followed in the train of Mahometanism, its gigantic struggle with Christianity offers much that is encouraging and glorious. It shows us how the fire of tribulation, by consuming the useless stubble, purifies and strengthens the wheat, that is, the true and faithful Christians. The power of the Greek emperors in Syria and Egypt was broken like a reed before the Moslem invasion. But they had brought their fate upon themselves. The following words were uttered by a brave and venerable old man, before the Emperor Heraclius and his whole council:—"The victories of the Moslems are owing to the anger of God against the Greeks, who trample on the precepts of the Gospel, abandon themselves to shameful excesses, and by their oppression, tyranny, and cruelty of every kind, wage upon each other a more fearful war than that with which the Moslems threaten them." The little band of Christian Spaniards on the contrary, who had retreated for defence to the mountains, were animated by the most heroic faith. Monks, priests, and laymen encountered martyrdom with such joy, that in the year 852, the Council of Toledo expressly forbade them to voluntarily surrender themselves to the Mahometan authorities. Well and truly did the Spanish nation fulfil its duty as the Western bulwark of the Church against Islam! The annals of their eight hundred years' struggle against the false

prophet till the time when Spain was swept clear of his followers, are filled with heroic deeds. Amid continual warfare, the Christian kingdoms of Castile, Leon, Arragon, Navarre, and Portugal, gradually arose. During the eleventh century countless Moors poured forth from Africa to the aid of the Spanish Moslems, but in vain. Strong in their faith, the Christian heroes were not to be overcome. It was at this time that they took the strong cities of Toledo and Valencia, and then too flourished that unsurpassed Castilian warrior, Don Rodrigo Diaz, known and dreaded by the Moslems as the "Cid," or Lord. But especially glorious for Spain was the thirteenth century. Then St. Ferdinand of Castile (died 1252) was renowned far and wide no less for his warlike deeds than for his holy life. He conquered Cordova, the seat of the Moslem rule, and Seville, the strongest and most populous city of Spain. The governor of the latter, on seeing himself conquered, exclaimed with tears that none but a saint could have taken so strong and well-garrisoned a town with so few men. In 1492, Granada, the last stronghold of the Moslems, was taken by the Christians. Christianity thus came forth victorious from the hard fight, and Spain, as the reward of her unshaken fidelity, preserves to this day the priceless gift of true devotion to the Catholic Church.

"Though Christianity was never indeed uprooted in the countries conquered from the Greek Empire by the Moslems, yet, owing to its separation from the true Church, it sunk into a state of torpor and degradation, beneath which it still languishes."

In following the history of the schismatic Greek Church up to the present time, it must be admitted in its praise that the Mahometan powers have never succeeded in accomplishing its complete destruction. Numbers of its members have withstood the temptation of avoiding great hardships by embracing Islamism and have remained true to the Christian faith. But like a branch torn from its parent stem, it is void of life-giving sap, and incapable of bearing further fruit. In it we cannot see even a trace of that ardent zeal for the spread of God's kingdom, of that ever fresh faith and life of willing devotion, which in the Roman Catholic Church is ever giving proof of the abiding operation of the Holy Ghost. Where, in the Eastern Church, do we find those zealous missionaries, those men mighty in

word and deed, of whom so many have arisen in the West? Such, for instance, as St. Bernard, St. Dominic, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Ignatius Loyola, and St. Francis Xavier? Where are her legions of martyrs? Where do we find in her a Thomas Aquinas, a Charles Borromeo, a Vincent de Paul? Theologians, sainted bishops, and heroes of charity such as these the schismatic Church has none to show. A cold deathlike stupor everywhere prevails in her. Since her divorce from Rome, the despotic will of the Byzantine emperors has paralyzed her energies, and from the free spouse of Christ she has become the handmaiden, or rather the helpless slave, of the State. Her servitude beneath the Turkish rule is yet more degrading. The condition of the patriarchate of Constantinople has been rightly described as the lowest and most miserable to which an old and honoured see could have fallen. And far from possessing within itself any renovating power, it has but extended its own corruption to the whole hierarchy. Simony and bribery prevail everywhere to a dreadful degree, both among the higher and lower clergy, together with all manner of practices for extorting gifts and imposts. The man who can pay most for the office is chosen by the Sultan to be patriarch, and arbitrarily deposed by him should another come forward with a higher offer. A patriarch, therefore, seldom dies in the enjoyment of his dignities. Having bought them with hard-won money, he proceeds to reimburse himself by the sale of bishoprics and archbishoprics, and the purchasers of these retaliate in their turn by extortions on the lower clergy and people. The ignorance of the priests is in general such that the greater number cannot write, and some cannot even read; and, which marks the climax of degradation, the supreme decision in ecclesiastical questions very often emanates from the Turkish Government, as was expressly certified by the patriarch Anthimos to the Holy Father Pius IX.*

No better is the condition of the schismatic Greek Church of Russia. It had been founded before the schism of Cerularius, and was included in the separation from Rome by reason of its dependence on the patriarchate of Constantinople. A decree published in the year 1551 shows into what a state of decay it had then fallen. A council was held at Moscow by Macarius, an excellent patriarch, for the re-establishment of Church discipline, which had fallen into lamentable confusion; and at this council it was unanimously decreed that "of all heresies condemned by the Church, none is so

* It actually happened that the dispute regarding the admixture of water with the sacramental wine was carried before the Turkish Reis-Effendi, who pronounced that "wine was an unclean drink, and condemned by the Koran, and that therefore pure water should be used."

culpable as that of shaving the beard ; so much so that martyrdom itself would not be sufficient to cleanse from such a crime ;" and that "whosoever shaves his beard from human respect, is a transgressor of the law and an enemy of God, who created us after His image and likeness." Usurping the office of the powerful patriarch of Moscow, Peter the Great assembled the "Holy Synod," as it was called, at St. Petersburg, in the year 1721, and when the clergy demanded the restoration of their patriarch, he replied, striking his breast indignantly, "Here is your patriarch." (See Döllinger, "The Church and the Churches," pp. 156-190, and Wetzer's "Kirchen Lexicon," Art. "Griechische Kirche und Russen.") With regard to the morals of the Russian clergy, the report of the Holy Synod to their president, (the emperor's adjutant and master of the horse) states that from 1836 to 1839 one-sixth of their whole number—that is to say, 13,443 clerics—had been convicted in the law courts of disgraceful offences. Having thus glanced onwards to the present condition of the schismatic Greek Church, we will return to the history of earlier ages.

SECTION XL.

SUFFERINGS OF THE CHRISTIANS IN PALESTINE—COUNCIL OF CLERMONT—FIRST CRUSADE—CONQUEST OF JERUSALEM—THE NEW KINGDOM—SUCCESSIVE CRUSADES—DOWNFALL OF THE GREEK EMPIRE—ON THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE CRUSADES—RELIGIOUS ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD—PROTECTION OF THE CHRISTIANS FROM THE TURKS BY THE BLESSED VIRGIN—THE ORDERS OF THE TEUTONIC KNIGHTS, AND OF THE BROTHERS OF THE SWORD.

"The Mahometans had early seized upon the Holy Land. Their rapacity and cruelty towards the Christian pilgrims from the West occasioned the 'Crusades,' as they were called, at the end of the eleventh century. The pious pilgrim, Peter of Amiens, described to Pope Urban II. how the holy places where our Lord had lived and suffered were desecrated by the heathen, and beneath what tyranny the Christians groaned. The Pope at once formed the courageous purpose of restraining the greed and arrogance of the Mahometans. He summoned a council of Christian knights and princes at Clermont, exhorted them to make war on the unbelievers, and roused them to such enthusiasm that all cried out with one voice, 'God wills it! God wills it!' The cry was re-echoed throughout the West, and an immense army was soon equipped, which courageously pushed its way to Palestine. After great labours

and much hard fighting, Jerusalem was at last taken in the year 1099, and the heroic Godfrey de Bouillon, Duke of Lorraine, was elected king. He however refused to wear a crown of gold on the spot where his Lord and Saviour had once worn a crown of thorns, and would take no title but that of 'Duke Godfrey.'"

As early as the year 638, the Arabian Moslems had seized Jerusalem and the Holy Land, and in spite of their wonted intolerance the lot of the Christians under their rule had been bearable enough. Such of the faithful as went on pilgrimages to Jerusalem, with the pious object of venerating the spots trodden and inhabited by their Lord, were freely suffered to offer Him the tribute of their love and gratitude; and the Caliph Haroun Alraschid had even, as we have seen, delivered the keys of the Holy Sepulchre to Charlemagne. But when the Holy Land fell under the dominion of the Egyptian Fatimite dynasty, and afterwards under that of the Turks, the lot of the Christians became much harder. Heavy taxes were imposed upon them, and the insolence of the Moslems towards them was such that on feast days they would shut them into their houses to prevent them from assisting at the ceremonies of their religion. The rabble were allowed to illtreat them unhindered, and to force them by tortures to apostatise. The splendid church of the Resurrection even was destroyed, though it was afterwards restored by the generosity of the Christians and the influence of the Greek emperor. Once it happened that while the Christians were at divine service the unbelievers rushed into the church, sprang upon the altar, flung down the chalice, and dragged the patriarch to the ground by his hair and beard. No pilgrim was allowed to enter the holy places until he had paid the tribute of a piece of gold. Thousands of them lay naked and hungry outside the city gates waiting for entrance, and many died within sight of Jerusalem and of the holy places, which they were destined never to tread.

About the year 1093, Peter, a pious and holy man of the French city of Amiens, undertook a pilgrimage to the tomb of the Redeemer. When there, the desolation of the holy

places, the despair of the Christians, the tears and bitter complaints of the patriarch Simeon, filled his soul with sorrow and compassion. He resolved to devote himself entirely to the amelioration of their condition, and to this end determined to make known the state of the Christians of Palestine to their brethren in the West. In the church of the Resurrection he fervently implored strength and blessing from God. During his prayer, as we are told, he fell asleep, and our Lord appearing, spoke to him, saying, "Arise, Peter, hasten! Perform with courage what thou hast resolved. I will be with thee. It is time that the sanctuary should be cleansed, and that My servants should be helped." Rising up wonderfully strengthened, Peter set off homewards, provided with letters from the patriarch for Pope Urban II. and the princes of the West. The Pope received the pious pilgrim with favour, and heard with deep sympathy of the sufferings of the Christians in Jerusalem. Ambassadors too had come from the Greek Emperor Alexius, who earnestly begged for help. The Pope formed the generous resolution of calling on Western Christendom to do battle against the powerful foe which was threatening all around it with destruction. To this end he empowered Peter, who was full of zeal for the holy work, to make known everywhere the necessities and oppression of the Christians of Palestine. Making light of toil and difficulty, he travelled through Italy and France, and by his burning words filled all hearts with enthusiasm for the war. In November A.D. 1095, Pope Urban summoned a great council at Clermont in France. Fourteen archbishops, three hundred bishops, and four hundred abbots were present at it, and of the laity, princes and knights without number also attended. Amidst profound silence Peter pictured to the listening crowd the misery and sufferings of the Eastern Christians, and the profanation of the holy places where Jesus bled for us. No eye remained dry; all present wept and sighed. The Holy Father himself, deeply moved, then spoke. "Beloved brethren," he said, "the Land of Promise, the cradle of the Saviour, the land in which was consum-

mated the work of our salvation, is in the power of an impious people. Dogs have entered the sanctuary, and the Holy of Holies is defiled. The faithful lie slain in the churches, and neither age nor sex is spared. The blood of the saints is poured out like water, and there are none there to bury their bodies. Who can hear this with dry eyes? Better for us that we had never been born than that we should see the ruin of our people and of the holy city, and yet sit still and let the enemy work his pleasure. Arm yourselves with zeal for God, beloved brothers; gird on your swords, and show yourselves sons of the mighty One. Better is it to die in battle than to see the sufferings of our people and of the saints. Go forth, and God will be with you. Turn those weapons with which you now so wickedly make war on one another and spill the blood of your brethren, against the enemy of the Christian faith and name. God wills it! Trusting in His mercy, and in the power of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, we remit to all the faithful who shall assume arms in a spirit of true piety, and who take on them the labours of this pilgrimage, all the penances laid upon them for their sins; and whoever shall die on this journey will, if truly penitent, receive without doubt remission of all their sins, and enter into life everlasting. None shall venture to molest the goods or the families of the absent pilgrims; we place them and theirs under the protection of holy Church." A thousand voices cried out at once in answer, "God wills it! God wills it!" "Be these words," the Pope continued, "your battle-cry in every danger; be the Cross your sign of strength and of humility, and the gracious Mother of God your patroness." Bishop Adhemar of Puy then came forward. He had already been in the Holy Land, and declared himself willing to undertake the pilgrimage. His example was followed by both clergy and laity of all ranks and conditions. To the right shoulder of each, Pope Urban attached a red cross in token of their pious purpose. Bishop Adhemar, who was full of courage and zeal, was named papal legate and spiritual leader of the Crusade.

The assembly broke up amidst universal joy, and its members, on their return to their homes, spread everywhere the enthusiasm with which they were themselves inspired. Towns and villages became changed into camps and exercise-grounds. Everywhere men were arming themselves with assiduous zeal. Counts left their castles, princes their possessions, the peasant quitted his plough, and the monk his cell. Murderers and robbers came forth from their hiding-places to begin life afresh and atone in the holy war for their misdeeds. A new spirit seemed to have been poured out from Heaven upon the nations. Strife, feud, and oppression everywhere ceased, and all longed for the hour when they should start. To many thousands the delay appeared too long, and in the spring of 1096 a great host crossed Germany and Hungary on its road to Constantinople, but from not being united under one leader, they for the most perished miserably. At last on the feast of the Assumption of our Blessed Lady, the day named for the general departure, the princes with their armies set forth. The most distinguished among them were Hugues de Vermandois, brother of the French king, Philip I., a man rich in virtue and all knightly qualities; the pious and powerful Count Raymund of Toulouse; Stephen of Blois, who owned as many castles as there are days in the year; Robert of Flanders; Robert of Normandy, brother to the King of England; and later on the bold and crafty Bohemund of Tarentum, and his brave nephew Tancred. But the one who excelled all others, as well in wisdom and piety as in courage, was the noble Godfrey de Bouillon, Duke of Lower Lorraine, who, with his brothers Baldwin and Eustace, led an army of 80,000 foot and 10,000 horse through Austria, Hungary, and Bulgaria to Constantinople, whilst the other leaders went by Dalmatia or Epirus. The camp of Godfrey was a model. No curser, blasphemer, nor even a mischief-making person was allowed there. Morning and evening all joined in prayer, and psalms and hymns in praise of Christ, His Blessed Mother,

and the heavenly Jerusalem, alternated with other pious or warlike songs.

The first brilliant deed of the Christians was a splendid victory before the walls of Nicæa over an immense Mahometan host. Adhemar held aloft the Papal banner, encouraging the soldiers by his burning words, and they threw themselves like flaming cherubim on their fierce enemies. After untold efforts they succeeded in taking the fortress of Nicæa, enclosed as it was by a strong wall with 750 towers, and defended on one side by a deep ditch and on the other by a great lake. Fearful sufferings however awaited the Crusaders during their onward march through immense uninhabited wastes, and thousands of them died of the privations which they underwent. The siege of the strong fortress of Antioch tested to the utmost their courage and confidence in God. A wall, so thick that a carriage with four horses abreast could be driven on the top of it, and guarded by 450 huge towers, defied all their efforts. They were harassed also by the constant sallies of the powerful Turkish garrison and by attacks on all sides from bodies of horsemen; added to which the want of food and exposure to cold and wet produced a fearful pestilence in the camp. At last, however, the Crusaders succeeded in entering the city at night by the help of an Armenian renegade, who was on guard in one of the towers. They were hardly however in possession, when the Emir of Mosul came up with an army of at least 300,000 men and surrounded the town on all sides. Famine now ensued among them, prostrating the strongest and bravest, and discouragement was fast turning to despair. But fresh zeal and strength was now infused into the worn-out combatants, by the discovery through a divine revelation, of the holy lance in the church of St. Peter. The enemy had sworn that not one of the Christians should escape the sword; but they, dividing themselves into twelve columns, in honour of the twelve apostles, rushed as one man out of the city gates, and falling on the Moslems, put them to a disgraceful flight, and seized upon the abundant stores of provision and treasure which their camp contained.

At length, in June 1099, the Crusaders approached the long-desired city of Jerusalem. The people could no longer be restrained. During the last night of their journey they vied with one another in pressing eagerly forward, many of them barefoot. Each wished to be the first to see the holy city. At last the peaks of Sion came in view. The horsemen dismounted, and all fell on their knees and kissed the

earth, shedding tears of joy. They then marched forward, solemnly chanting till they were close beneath the walls of the town. The great army, which on first entering Asia Minor had numbered 600,000 foot and 100,000 fully armed horsemen, had now, from hard fighting, privation, and disease, dwindled down to 20,000 foot and 1500 horse; and Jerusalem was strongly fortified and contained above 40,000 brave and well-armed men. The champions of the Cross were not however discouraged. This was the city for which they had endured so much, and they were now so near the goal of all their labours! On the sixth day after their arrival they ventured on a general storm, and the attack was conducted on all sides with such courage, that the enemy, alarmed, retreated within the inner walls. This time, however, the Christians did not succeed in their attempt for want of battering-rams. And where in that waste and treeless country could wood be found with which to make them? God's providence, however, led them to discover in a valley near Bethlehem some huge trunks of trees lying buried beneath the earth. High and low worked with joyful alacrity, and rams and other engines of attack were prepared. The Christian camp, meanwhile, was suffering much from the great scarcity of water. The sun's heat was intense, and the unbelievers had destroyed all the springs and water-courses. The Crusaders were obliged to fetch water from a place six miles distant, at the risk, too, of being slain or captured by the enemy's outlying bands. The animals were dying of thirst, noxious vapours poisoned the air, and to all these sufferings, that of famine too was soon added.

In the midst of their distress, however, the joyful news came that a Genoese fleet had just landed at Joppa, bringing provisions, tools, and skilled workmen. To this soon followed the less welcome intelligence that a powerful army was marching from Egypt to the relief of Jerusalem.

A general attack therefore was at once resolved upon. For this the Crusaders prepared themselves by a three days' fast, and by approaching the holy sacraments. On the morning

of the 8th of July the whole host left the camp, and, preceded by priests in white vestments, bearing crosses, banners, and relics, they marched barefooted to the holy city, invoking with prayers and psalms the help of God and the saints. Mass was said within sight of Calvary, and on the Mount of Olives the Flemish priest, Arnulf, and Peter of Amiens, so powerfully addressed the army, that all, leaders and followers alike, grasped each others' hands, and swore to stand by one another truly till death.

After a few feints, the real siege began on the 14th of July. In all the camp there was not one who was not inspired with martial ardour; the sick, old men and boys, even the very women, took up arms; with bold hearts they drew their besieging engines to the walls. Showers of arrows were poured on them by the enemy, and huge stones, beams, torches, and burning pitch flung down upon them. But the Crusaders stood firm, till night put an end to the struggle. Day had scarcely begun to dawn when each was again at his post. The battle raged as fiercely as before and with unflagging energy. But the storm lasted many hours, and the victory was not yet gained. The strength of the Christians flagged, they began to waver, and the besieged were already exulting, when suddenly, just at the hour at which our Lord died upon the Cross, a knight with a shining shield appeared upon the side of the Mount of Olives, and signed to them to continue the struggle. "Do you see the heavenly sign?" Godfrey exclaimed with joy. The Christians again took courage, shouting loudly, "God helps us! God wills it!" They pushed forward with renewed vigour, broke through the outer wall, and flung the drawbridges from Godfrey's tower across to the inner wall. Led by Godfrey, they rushed bold as lions on the unbelievers, drove them from the walls and towers, and opened the gates. In poured the whole Christian host, and a desperate battle ensued within the city. Blood flowed in streams, and the unbelievers lay slain by thousands in the houses, streets, and public places. After they had duly secured the city by placing sentinels in all

the towers, the bloodstained victors laid aside their arms, changed their garments, and then barefooted, many of them on their knees, went humbly and with tears of compunction, to visit those sacred spots which our Lord had hallowed by His presence. "It was a most fair sight," writes William, Archbishop of Tyre, following the account of an eyewitness, "to see with what fervent devotion the people trod the holy places, and with what spiritual joy and exultation they kissed the spots where our Lord had suffered. All wept and sighed, not from sorrow and anguish, but from the ardour of piety and the abundance of interior joy. Some confessed their sins to God, vowing never to return to them; others gave all they had to the poor, because they counted that God had given them the highest riches in allowing them to see that day." At the church of the Resurrection the clergy of the city met them in solemn procession, with psalms and hymns of praise. The bishops and priests offered the holy sacrifice in the churches, prayed for the people, and returned thanks for the miracles which had been shown them. During the following days the corpses were removed from the streets, order was taken for the occupation of the city, and for the celebration, with added splendour, of the divine service. Each gladly offered to the Church part of the treasure he had seized, and feasts were instituted in perpetual memory of the wonderful mercies which God had shown them. On the seventh day they chose a king. All with one voice voted in favour of Godfrey, the pious Christian hero and the glory of chivalry. When, however, his coronation was spoken of, he refused to wear on his head a golden crown in the place where Jesus Christ, the King of kings, had worn a crown of thorns, and the only title he would accept was that of "Guardian of the Holy Sepulchre."

The commander-in-chief of the Sultan of Egypt was now fast approaching with a great host, to save the sinking power of Islam from destruction. To his army of 300,000 men Godfrey had hardly 20,000 to oppose. But with this hand-

ful nevertheless, he ventured, trusting in God's protection, on an open battle. With the Cross borne before him, he led his troops towards Ascalon, and very early in the morning they approached the enemy's camp. On perceiving their foe, all fell on their knees and earnestly besought help from above. The valour of the Christians conquered. They defeated the Moslems with great slaughter, and seized their camp. This glorious victory secured the Christian domination in Palestine.

"The new kingdom lasted hardly a hundred years. Owing to the treachery of the Greeks, and to the license and disunion of the Crusaders, it was unable, notwithstanding continued reinforcements from the West, to stand against the growing power of the Turks. This spread steadily, until in the fifteenth century, they took Constantinople itself, and that retribution which had so long been gathering fell at last upon the Greek Empire."

Godfrey discharged his difficult task with great wisdom and prudence. He drew up a fixed constitution for the new kingdom, and preserved the lustre of his name untarnished. He died however during the following year. His brave brother Baldwin Count of Edessa, was chosen to fill his vacant place. Amidst many hard battles and with varying fortunes, he and his immediate successors maintained and extended the Christian rule. But it soon became too plain that no heroism would eventually enable the Christian king to hold his own against the Moslems. His subordinates, who remained in the East, were unfortunately disunited among themselves. The new kingdom split up into small principalities, whose rulers often turned their arms against one another, and for the most part paid more regard to their separate interests than to the common welfare of the realm. The power of the enemy on the contrary, was growing stronger and stronger, and fast becoming irresistible. The catastrophe which had long threatened took place at last. In the year 1187, scarcely ninety years after the first Crusade, the much-dreaded Saladin destroyed the Christian army in the bloody battle of Hittin, took prisoner Guy de Lusignan

who was then King of Jerusalem, and forced his capital to surrender. Thus did the holy city, for which hundreds of thousands of Christians had joyfully given their lives and shed their blood, fall again into the hands of the unbelievers, the holy places were desecrated, and the Cross again was scorned there. In the year 1229, Frederic II., by a treaty with the Sultan of Egypt, restored Jerusalem to Christian hands; but fifteen years later it fell permanently into the possession of the infidels. The Christians retained a small territory, the rulers of which continued to style themselves kings of Jerusalem, until the year 1291, when Ptolemais, the last of their possessions, passed into the power of the Moslems.

The West did not look on unmoved at the desperate struggle going on between the Christian kingdom of Jerusalem and its overwhelming enemies. The zeal of the Popes, and the ardour of many holy preachers, called upon it time after time to join in the combat. When, in 1146, the Mussulmans took the fortified city of Edessa, slew 30,000 of the inhabitants, and carried 16,000 into slavery, the news convulsed the whole of Western Europe. Many miracles confirmed the mission of St. Bernard, when at the command of Pope Eugenius III., he preached a new Crusade in France and Germany. The people were filled with enthusiasm, and in the year 1147, Louis VII. of France and the Emperor Conrad III. set off for Constantinople at the head of a powerful army. From Constantinople they crossed to Asia Minor, but to the eternal shame of the Greeks, their emperor Manuel through jealousy and suspicion, caused the Crusading army to be misled through waste and trackless regions, where they in great part perished from hunger and the swords of the unbelievers, so that it was but with a small remnant of their followers that the princes reached the end of their journey. As years went on numbers of warlike pilgrims entered Palestine. By the year 1270 there had been, besides lesser expeditions, seven great Crusades, the last two of which were undertaken by St. Louis of France. All failed however, sometimes owing to the jealousy and disunion of their leaders, sometimes to the ravages of famine and pestilence, the usual scourges of great armies, and often in consequence of the malice and bad faith of the Greek emperors, who viewed askance the successes of the Western princes, and did all in their power to frustrate their endeavours. In so doing the rulers of Constantinople exposed themselves to suffer the

more from the growing Turkish arrogance. The day of sorrow and destruction was coming fast upon the proud imperial city. A terrible siege awaited her. In the year 1453 the dreaded Mohammed II. surrounded her on all sides, and attacked her both by land and sea. A breach was made in the walls by means of huge cannon, and the enemy rushed in over ruins and the bodies of the slain. The last of the emperors, Constantine XI., fell fighting bravely. Thousands of the inhabitants were slain without mercy, and thousands more led into hopeless slavery. The splendid church of St. Sophia was turned into a mosque. On that same altar, on which had been deposited the Papal bull of excommunication against the schismatics, the Koran now lay, a token that God's vengeance had at last overtaken the guilty. Can we indeed help seeing here the retribution of God on those who had refused to submit themselves to the power which He had appointed, at the Council of Florence? Fifteen years before Pope Eugenius IV. had used every effort to bring about the long-desired reunion of the Eastern and Western Churches. But Constantinople would not see the things that were for her peace and salvation. The work of reconciliation, which had been happily completed, was again maliciously destroyed. The people, excited against Rome, expended their rage in vilifying the Western Church, and cried in unthinking scorn, "that they hated the turban less than the cardinal's hat." A nation such as this was ripe for destruction, and according to their words, it was done to them.

Though the results of the Crusades by no means corresponded to the joyous anticipations which they had called forth, yet they cannot be looked upon as simply so many military failures. Regarded in a higher light, the remembrance of these gigantic and apparently fruitless expeditions will fill us with reverence and admiration; for it is indeed a beautiful and elevating spectacle to behold the various nations of the West, with their princes and nobles, who would else have been engaged in bloody conflicts with one another, now united as brothers beneath the banner of the Cross, by their common devotion to their Redeemer. And even though many adventurers joined them, and though the motives of many were alloyed by ambition and desire of conquest or plunder, yet do the Crusades ever remain a most wonderful manifestation, and one that bears striking witness to the profound faith, the religious zeal, and the marvellous spirit of

self-sacrifice which characterised the age. Though the conduct of the Crusaders was often not such as to deserve God's blessing upon their undertaking, there is yet no manner of doubt that thousands of those taken captive by the enemy steadfastly refused to purchase life or liberty by denial of their faith; nor yet that thousands too, purified by trial and bitter sufferings, died blessed deaths. It was thus that the holy Abbot John consoled St. Bernard for the defeat of the second great Crusade. He wrote (Letter 386) to the saint, saying that God had revealed to him that a great number of the slain Crusaders had received the thrones of the fallen angels in heaven, and that he had heard too, from eyewitnesses, that many encountered death with joy, not once desiring to return to their homes lest they should fall again into new sins.

The magnanimity and heroic virtue also of the Christian warriors often extorted the respect and admiration of even the fiercest of the Moslems. Especially glorious among many others is the example of St. Louis, King of France. After having, during his first expedition, taken the fortified city of Damietta in Egypt, he was made prisoner together with a great part of his army, by the Sultan, owing to his brother's imprudence. Superior to misfortune, he maintained his habitual calm and cheerfulness during his captivity. The Mussulmans demanded as his ransom all the places in Syria which were yet held by the Christians. Louis replied that he had no right to dispose of them; and on being threatened with torture, said merely, "I am the Sultan's prisoner, he can do what he will with me." The Sultan now professed himself content to receive as ransom the town of Damietta and a million pieces of gold. Louis answered, "A king of France does not give money for his own ransom; I will give the city for my person, and the money for my followers." The Sultan, in admiration of his magnanimity, abated of his own accord one-fifth of the sum named. Shortly afterwards the Sultan was murdered. One of the murderers tore out his heart, and, showing it to King Louis, asked what he would give him for having killed his enemy. Louis gave him no reply. On this

the villain held forth his sword, and demanded of the king that he should make him a knight on the spot, threatening him with death if he refused. All the king answered was, "Do thou become a Christian and I will make thee a knight."

"The zeal and courage of the Knights of Malta and of the other orders of Christian chivalry, together with the evident protection of the glorious Mother of God, saved Europe, and notably Germany, which was in the greatest danger, from falling a prey to the fury of the Turks."

The Crusades were of the greatest importance in preserving the safety of Europe. Had not the Christians united in attacking the Turks within their own territory, and so keeping them in check, one after another of the countries of the West must have fallen under the ever-spreading Moslem rule. The holy wars secured Europe for centuries from her hereditary foe. Through them too, one of the chief glories of the Middle Ages, the institution of chivalry, attained its full development. It was at its highest perfection during the three hundred years which followed the first Crusade. It is to the Christian faith that the glory belongs, of having subdued and consecrated the fierce and warlike spirit which animated the men of that time. The fairest day in the life of a noble youth was that upon which he received the honours of knighthood from some famous warrior. He prepared for the ceremony by prayer, fasting, and the reception of the sacraments, and usually spent the previous night in watching beside his arms in a church or chapel. Then, in the presence of bishops, abbots, knights, and ladies, he swore ever to speak the truth, to uphold the right, to honour the Church, her servants, and goods, to protect the weak and oppressed, never to offer injury to any woman, and above all, never to endure scorn of the Christian faith. After this he was richly dressed, and fully armed by the squires, and then knighted by three blows given with the flat of the sword upon the shoulders, in the name of the archangel Michael and St. George.

It was the Holy Land that gave birth to the highest developments of chivalry. Here arose the religious orders of

knighthood—the Knights of St. John, otherwise called the Knights of Malta; the Knights of the Temple, and the Teutonic Knights. These for many centuries were the bulwark of Christendom and the terror of the unbelievers. Each order had its own general or Grand Master. Their members took the ordinary religious vows, and added another by which they bound themselves to fight against the infidels. The Knights of St. John received their name from a convent in Jerusalem, which with a church and hospital had been founded in the year 1048 by some Italian merchants in honour of St. John the Baptist. Their vocation was at first confined to the care of the poor pilgrims and of the sick in the hospital. But when, after the taking of Jerusalem by the Christians, many of the followers of Godfrey de Bouillon desired to join the brotherhood, its second general, Raymund du Puy, added to its other obligations that of doing battle with the unbelievers. The rule which he drew up was confirmed by Pope Calixtus II. in 1120, and from all parts of Europe young nobles thronged into the order eager to devote their lives to the holy war. After the loss of Palestine, the Knights of St. John had their headquarters in the island of Cyprus; later in that of Rhodes, and lastly, in the year 1530, in Malta, whence their name of “Knights of Malta.” The dress of the order was a black mantle having a white cross on the breast. The order of the Temple was founded in 1118 by some pious French knights for the protection of Christian pilgrims. They were called “Templars” from their house at Jerusalem being close to the site of Solomon’s Temple. Their habit differed from that of the Knights of Malta in the mantle being white, with a red cross. The order was confirmed by Pope Honorius II., and St. Bernard addressed its members in the following words of praise and encouragement: “Rejoice,” he writes, “brave warrior, when thou livest and art victorious in the Lord; but rejoice and exult still more when thou diest and departest to the Lord! O blessed life, in which each one waits for death with sweetest longing!” The order eventually attained to great wealth, power, and consideration, but it did

not last above two hundred years. In the year 1312 Pope Clement V. found himself obliged to suppress it at the instance of Philip the Fair, King of France; but whether on account of real or supposed crimes remains to this day a vexed question.

Both these military orders, especially the first, rendered good service to Christendom, thus bearing witness to the power which religion has of fostering a spirit of heroism. In 1480 Mohammed II. came with an immense fleet to take possession of the island of Rhodes, then in the hands of the Knights of St. John. But the bravest of his troops, in spite of their numbers, were unable to gain any advantage over the insignificant handful of Christian warriors. Mohammed withdrew without having effected his object, and caused the following epitaph to be written on his tomb:—"Two empires and twelve kingdoms have I conquered, and I desired to conquer Rhodes." The siege which the Knights of St. John sustained from Soliman II. in 1522 was equally famous. The Turkish army consisted of 140,000 soldiers, and 60,000 peasants to work in the trenches. The Knights only numbered 500, and their followers about 5000. Nevertheless they victoriously repulsed the first attack, and slew from forty to fifty thousand of the enemy. Some months later another furious assault was made upon them, which they again repulsed successfully. But the greater part of their fortifications were destroyed, their powder was running short, and their stock of provisions was scarcely sufficient for a single day. Soliman, out of respect for their valour, permitted the brave Knights to retreat with all the honours of war. Again, in the year 1565, the Mediterranean was the scene of deeds of indescribable heroism. The Knights of St. John had then withdrawn to Malta, and there these untiring champions of Christendom were again attacked by Soliman II. The Knights, with their heroic Grand Master, La Valette, at their head, fortified themselves by receiving Holy Communion, and renewed their vows before the battle. Confident then of victory, they repulsed the enemy's attacks with superhuman power, and when in the following year, the Sultan prepared to renew the siege, the Grand Master caused the docks and arsenal to be destroyed, so as to leave no anchorage for the enemy's fleet.¹

¹ The order remained at Malta, boldly defending Christendom against the Turks and the African pirates, until they were expelled thence by Napoleon in the year 1798. Under the protection of the Pope and the Emperor of Austria it yet continues to exist, and it is most encouraging to remark the lively interest manifested in it by the Catholic nobility of Prussia, who in the late war gave so splendid an example of Christian charity by their attendance on the sick and wounded on the field of battle.

In all these victories the pious warriors did not fail to give God the glory, and thankfully to acknowledge the powerful aid of Mary, the glorious Queen of Heaven. In gratitude for her protection, the Grand Master, Pierre d'Aubusson, built the church of "Our Lady of Victories" in Rhodes after the disgraceful retreat of the Turks. But it was in the year 1571, at the battle of Lepanto, where the Christian fleet won a brilliant victory over an overwhelming Turkish force, that Mary's help was most evidently given. It was long before the Mahometan power recovered from the crushing blow which it then received. Numbers of Turkish ships were sunk, 130 were brought in triumph to Messina; nearly 25,000 Turks together with their leaders were slain, 10,000 were taken prisoners, and 15,000 Christian captives were set free. On the 7th of October, the day on which this victory took place, all the confraternities of the Rosary throughout Christendom had united in fervent prayer for Mary's powerful aid. For this reason Pope St. Pius V. did not hesitate to ascribe this victory, under God, to the help of our Blessed Lady, and accordingly instituted the feast of "Our Lady of Victories," on the 7th of October, and added the title, "Help of Christians" to the Litany of Loretto. In thanksgiving for this same victory Gregory XIII. subsequently granted to all churches of the confraternity of the Rosary, permission to keep the feast of the holy Rosary on the first Sunday in October. And when, in 1716, the famous Prince Eugene gained in Hungary a complete victory over the Turks, who were then threatening to overrun Germany, Clement XI. extended this festival of the Rosary to the whole Church. So too it was on a like occasion that the feast of the Holy Name of Mary, which was formerly celebrated only in certain countries, was made by Innocent XI. in 1683, one of the feasts of the universal Church. The Turks had then laid siege to Vienna. The panic was at its height. All called on Mary, the help of Christians. The pious John Sobieski encouraged his troops to the assault, saying, "Let us fall on the enemy with full trust and confi-

dence in God's help and in the protection of the most Blessed Virgin." And in a wonderfully short time the Christians had gained the victory over an enemy four times their number.

Among the ranks of the Christians who distinguished themselves in battle with the unbelievers, the order of the Teutonic Knights is conspicuous. It was against the heathen Prussians however, rather than the Moslems, that God made special use of its aid. It was instituted in 1190, just after the loss of Jerusalem by the Christians. Like the Knights of St. John, its members at first confined themselves to the care of the sick, for whom a sail-cloth tent had been erected as an hospital during the siege of Ptolemais, by some pious merchants of Bremen and Lubeck. Numbers of German nobles however joined it, and under favour of the princes of the Crusade a new order of chivalry thus arose, which placed itself specially under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin, for which reason the Teutonic Knights were also styled "The Knights of Mary." Pope Celestine III. confirmed the order, and the Patriarch of Jerusalem gave it its distinguishing habit, a white mantle, with a black cross upon the left side. When, in 1226, the greater part of the Holy Land had fallen into the hands of the infidels, Duke Conrad of Massovia, a district near Warsaw, called upon the Teutonic Knights for help against the Prussians, and granted to them, besides the territory of Kulm, the possession of all such lands as they might conquer in Prussia. The Prussians clung to Paganism with unexampled obstinacy. They offered human sacrifices to their idols, and made inroads into the neighbouring Christian countries, slaying and plundering, and wasting all before them. A hard contest, which lasted for fifty years, ensued between these fierce Pagans and the Christian knights. The latter succeeded at length by prudence and patience in firmly establishing their power. Flourishing cities arose, and bishoprics were founded. The conquerors strove with untiring zeal to teach Christian doctrine and manners to the inhabitants. "Not as masters," says the chronicle, "but as fathers and brothers, did the brethren of the order ride to and fro in the land, visiting rich and poor alike, inviting the new Christians to their houses, taking part in their feasts, and with willing compassion tending the sick and poor amongst them in their hospitals. They took care also for the widows and orphans whose fathers and husbands had fallen in battle; and sent boys and young men of talent to Germany, especially to Magdeburg, to be instructed in Christianity and learn the German language in the schools, that later they might return to teach in Prussia." Great deeds too were performed in Livonia

by the order of the "Brothers of the Sword." This order was founded in 1201, by the Bishop of Riga, for the protection of the then newly-founded church. Its badge was a cross and sword upon a white mantle. They became weakened however by successive wars, and being unable to contend alone with their numerous and powerful enemies, they amalgamated themselves in the year 1237 with the Teutonic Knights. The lustre of the German orders of chivalry had begun however to fade in the beginning of the fifteenth century. Great wealth and power brought with them all kinds of evils and abuses. In the year 1525 Albrecht, Margrave of Brandenburg and Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights, embraced Protestantism with some others of the order, and since he retained Prussia, the property of the order, as his hereditary grand-duchy, the new grand master ("Hoch und Deutschmeister") established his residence at Mergentheim in modern Wurtemberg.¹

When we regard the advantages which accrued to the West from the Crusades, we find, besides those already mentioned, many others arising out of the immense influence which they exercised on the culture and well-being of the nations, especially by promoting the prosperity of the middle classes, by the impulse which they gave to navigation trade and manufactures, and, above all, by awakening an increased intellectual activity, and so stimulating the growth of science and the fine arts. This last deserves special consideration.

¹In modern times the order has always remained faithful to the Church and to the emperor, and has done good service, especially against the Turks. The pacification of Vienna in 1809 deprived it of all its possessions, even of those which it held under the Austrian Empire. Mergentheim, which had till now belonged to it, was annexed by Napoleon to the crown of Wurtemberg. New life was infused into the order by the exertions of its late famous Grand Master, the Archduke Maximilian, who died 1863, and who also revived the order of the Knights of Malta; and from the noble disposition of the present Grand Master, His Imperial Highness the Archduke Wilhelm, we may augur great things of its future.

SECTION XLI.

STATE OF LEARNING BEFORE THE TWELFTH CENTURY—ITS WONDERFUL DEVELOPMENT DURING THE TWELFTH AND THIRTEENTH CENTURIES—THE UNIVERSITIES—THE SCHOLASTICS—THE MYSTICS—CELEBRATED DOCTORS—RELIGIOUS SPIRIT OF THE MIDDLE AGES IN LIFE AND ART—RELIGIOUS ORDERS.

“Throughout the West the Crusades called forth a new intellectual life. At the period when Europe was devastated by the migration of the nations, learning had taken refuge in the cloister. Now it again began to be diffused amongst an eager multitude. Famous schools and universities arose whose chairs were filled by men of wonderful learning, such as St. Anselm, who died in 1109, Albert the Great, who died in 1280, St. Thomas Aquinas, who died in 1274, and many others.”

WE have seen how during the disturbances of the sixth and seventh centuries, learning took refuge in the monasteries, where it was preserved and fostered by the monks with the utmost care. We have also seen what good service was rendered to its cause by Charlemagne. But another state of things set in after the death of this great and good prince. Civil wars wasted the once powerful Frankish Empire. The ceaseless incursions of the Northmen, the Hungarians, and the Saracens, who plundered, burned, and wasted all before them, blasted the fair young shoots of learning. Churches and convents were destroyed and their libraries given to the flames—an irreparable loss in those days, when both the obtaining and the multiplying of books was attended with such labour and difficulty.¹ Deeds of violence too, strife and feuds between the great nobles and their followers, were as usual, the consequences of a weak government. It is easy to see how greatly, under such circumstances, the education of the clergy must have suffered. They for the most part shared in the general ignorance and torpidity, while the common people became more and more barbarous. This period has with right been called “a winter during which learning slept.” It would not however be true to say that all endeavour after learning had died out. There were always here and there some learned men, who exercised a beneficial

¹ Grace, Countess of Anjou, paid for a copy of the Homilies of Haymo, who died in 853, two hundred sheep, two measures of wheat, two measures of rye, two measures of millet, besides a certain number of marten skins.

influence on their age; good and holy bishops, famed far and near as prudent and faithful shepherds of their flocks; zealous missionaries, who carried the light of the Gospel to the heathen; and wise kings, who counted it among the chief of their duties to provide for the instruction of their people. (See vol. iv. pp. 279, 280.) In England, Alfred the Great, who ascended the throne in 872, did as much in this respect for his own country as Charlemagne had done for France. In Germany, Otto the Great, who died in 973, and St. Henry, who died in 1024, strove zealously to promote the spread of learning and culture. Many monasteries in Germany, amongst others St. Gall, Reichenau, and Hirsau, vied with each other in learned pursuits. It was in the tenth century, which has been the most decried of all in this respect, that the celebrated writer Roswitha lived in a convent at Gandersheim. She spoke fluently Latin and Greek, sung the deeds of the Emperor Otto in Latin verse, and left behind her many lives of the saints, and also six religious dramas, in which she celebrates the triumphant chastity of Christian virgins. Especially important and extensive was the influence of the abbey of Cluny in France. It was founded in 910 by Berno, a member of a noble Burgundian family, and was raised by his successors, the abbots Odo, Majolus, and Odilo, to a high pinnacle of fame. It had branch houses in many different countries, all of which held strictly to the Benedictine rule. Whilst the practices of asceticism strengthened its sons in all Christian virtues, and armed them as with a coat of mail against both the threats and promises of the world, diligent study filled their minds with noble and exalted ideas. From Cluny flowed forth, as from a fountain, a new desire for learning and for strictness of monastic discipline. It was named the resort of angels, the torch from which the order everywhere might rekindle its decaying glory—its charity, devotion, and spirit of penance. Gregory VII. was drawn to it by a powerful attraction. It was within its walls that his courage was strengthened and his zeal kindled for God's house. And later, when he found himself at the head of Christendom, he sought to fill the world with the spirit which he had there imbibed, and he especially devoted himself to bettering the condition and raising the moral tone of the clergy.

As yet such learning as existed had been exclusively in the possession of the clergy.¹ It had never yet penetrated

¹ For this reason learning came to be called "clerkship" (*clergie*), and a learned man was styled a "clerk" (*clericus*); thus, *satis clericus*, "sufficiently learned," *magnus clericus*, "very learned." (See Du Cange's Glossary.) It is thus no matter of surprise that the clergy should have exercised great influence in the settlement of worldly affairs. To make the power which they possessed

among the ranks of the people. At the time of the Crusades however, the thirst for knowledge received a powerful impulse. The wonderful enthusiasm with which God's Spirit had filled the West for the liberation of the Holy Sepulchre, led men also to seek and long after all that was good, beautiful, and noble. How, when the Crusaders first returned from the holy places, must they not have vied with one another in relating all the great and wonderful things that they had heard, seen and experienced! To the intellectual energy thus generated are owing the foundations of civil freedom, the prosperity of the great cities, and the circulation and interchange of knowledge. Everything conspired to spur men's minds to an activity hitherto undreamed of. Inventions became more and more numerous, great progress was made in the mechanical as well as in the fine arts; painting and architecture continually advanced to greater perfection; poetry flowed forth as from a fountain, delighting not only the rich and great but the whole people. The time was passed when a young prince learned nothing but the management of his horse and his sword, and was taught to regard the cultivation of his mind as a thing to be despised. From this time forward learning was held in honour by all classes. It was a sure road to the favour of princes and to the highest offices in Church and State. Not priests only, but laymen also, appeared as teachers, and filled Europe with their fame. Men and youths crowded from all parts into Italy, either to Bologna, to attend the famous lectures given there on Roman jurisprudence, or to Salerno, to study medicine under its distinguished doctors. In Paris, so great was the concourse of students to the far-famed chairs of theology, philosophy, and canon law, that at the end of the twelfth century they

a matter of reproach to them, would be to account their sagacity a crime, and to blame them for doing only what was necessary for the good of the people. "In those days," says Leibnitz, "when the clergy alone cultivated knowledge, and all other freemen gave themselves up to arms, it was fitting that a military government should be softened by the influence of the wise,—in other words, of the clergy."

were said to have outnumbered all the other inhabitants of the city. Schools such as these, to which teachers and scholars resorted from all countries, gained great fame, and were distinguished above the other cathedral and convent schools, and the places in which they were situated became the marts and centres of learning. For this reason they were called high schools and universities. To satisfy the increasing thirst for knowledge, other universities soon arose besides those of Paris, Bologna, and Salerno, not only in France and Italy, but also in Spain, Portugal, England, Scotland, and Brabant. The oldest German university is that of Prague (founded 1348). Its fame spread so fast that youths flocked to it even from Norway, Ireland, Spain, Naples, and Cyprus. Within the same century the universities of Vienna, Heidelberg, Cologne, Erfurt, Leipzig, and many others also arose in Germany. Throughout Christendom the universities were viewed with the highest respect. They were for the most part ecclesiastical foundations, under the superintendence and special patronage of the Holy See, and popes and emperors vied with one another in promoting their prosperity by grants of privileges and immunities. Each university was an independent body, with its own head, and its own laws and government secured to it by the favour of the sovereign. Connected with the universities were colleges, as they were called, for the maintenance of poor scholars. Here students were taught and lodged free of cost, and their moral and religious training was at the same time superintended by the authorities. Cities containing universities were forced, under pain of ecclesiastical censures, to provide food, lodging, and other necessities at a cheap rate. It was to the universities and high schools that kings and emperors submitted the most important questions for arbitration. We may thus see that in this age, which has always been so much misunderstood, the desire for learning was respected, encouraged, and fostered by our Christian forefathers. The writings of the period show that the researches of the learned extended into every branch of human knowledge. The title of "the

great" which was given to the blessed Albert, bears witness to this, for he earned it mainly through his varied learning, which extended also to the natural sciences. That knowledge should not have made equal progress in all its departments, cannot however surprise us, if we reflect how few aids to scientific research lay at the disposal of the student before the invention of printing. Immense discoveries have indeed been made in modern times concerning the visible universe, but in all that regards the knowledge and comprehension of the revealed truths of salvation, the Middle Ages were far in advance of our own. It is in this that the imperishable glory of the Middle Ages consists, namely, that as in all else, so too in their endeavours after knowledge, they were profoundly imbued with the spirit of Christianity. In those days men had not to seek the light of truth by wandering through the dark and endless by-ways of doubt; but secure in the conviction that in Christ the world possessed its true light, they were able to give all their powers to the attainment of a deeper insight into the divine truths of salvation. It was for this reason that the Middle Ages came to be especially devoted to the study of theology. Their first efforts in this direction were confined to the interpretation of the Scriptures, both of the Old and the New Testaments. How great was the knowledge then possessed on such subjects is shown by the sermons of St. Bernard, especially by that one (the 86th) upon the Canticle of Canticles, which his hearers could not have understood at all without an acquaintance with the language of the original. The next endeavours of theologians were aimed at summing up as completely as possible the divine truths of salvation, and to their explanation and development. They strove by intellectual acuteness to penetrate the mysteries of faith, to define their meaning, to guard against possible misconceptions, to lay down clearly their necessary consequences, to reconcile apparent contradictions, and to point out the accordance between revealed truth and the conclusions of reason. This was called the "speculative" or "scholastic theology." The same age gave birth

to mystical theology. Whilst the human understanding was eagerly occupied in the investigation of the divine truths,—in entering into their depths and discussing them in all their bearings,—devout souls also were immersed in their contemplation, thus satisfying their longing after heavenly things, uniting themselves to God by ardent charity, and preparing themselves for heroic deeds and sacrifices. This tendency to mysticism appears in many of the writings of the time; and as the works of the scholastics were specially distinguished by depth and subtilty of thought, so were those of the mystics by fervour and sincerity of devotion.

Scholastic theology took its rise with St. Anselm, the Augustine of the Middle Ages, equally eminent as a prince of the Church and as a man of letters. He was born in Piedmont in 1033. He taught during many years at the convent school of Bec, in France, and with such applause that scholars came in crowds to be instructed by him. After having governed the monastery for thirty years, first as prior, and then as abbot, he was raised to the archiepiscopal see of Canterbury in England. Here he died in the seventy-sixth year of his age, after having fought many famous battles for the liberties of the Church. His extraordinary learning and sanctity gained him the honour of being, in the year 1720, numbered among the doctors of the Church by Pope Clement XI.

The most remarkable man in his own time for varied learning was Albert the Great, whom we have already mentioned. He was a Swabian by birth, and of the house of the Counts of Bollstädt. He entered the yet new order of St. Dominic, and taught theology and philosophy at Hildesheim, Ratisbon, Strasburg, Paris, Rome, and for a long time at Cologne, where, besides other distinguished men, he numbered St. Thomas Aquinas among his pupils. In 1260 he was forced to accept the bishopric of Ratisbon, but he gave it up after two years, and retiring to Cologne, devoted the rest of his life to study. He died A.D. 1280. The books which he has left behind him, and which fill no less than twenty-one

folio volumes, bear witness to his indefatigable industry as well as to the extraordinary diversity and extent of his learning. He was beatified in 1622 by Pope Gregory XV.

But the prince of the scholastics, the greatest theologian and doctor of his time, and, next to St. Augustine, the greatest of Christian philosophers, is St. Thomas Aquinas, styled commonly "Doctor Angelicus," "the angel of the schools." He was born of a noble Neapolitan family. At seventeen he entered the Dominican order, and was sent to Cologne to study under Albert the Great. He was promoted to the professor's chair at the age of twenty-two, and won the admiration of both scholars and teachers by his humility and his learning. He was not however, to remain on the banks of the Rhine. The fame of his learning and sanctity had become spread abroad among all Christian nations. Paris, Rome, Bologna, and Naples, strove which should have the honour of possessing so great and holy a man. In obedience to his superiors he taught and preached in all these cities successively, and everywhere crowds came to listen to him with wonder and reverence, as if he were an angel of God. An old historian thus describes the grief felt at his death, which occurred in his forty-eighth year. "At the death of Thomas, it was as though the sun had sunk beneath the horizon in the midst of day, so great a commotion shook the world." St. Thomas left many works upon philosophy, theology, and the Holy Scriptures. Pope John XXII. said of him in full consistory, that "in one year more might be gained from his books than in a whole lifetime spent in the study of others."

Famous also among the theologians of his time is St. Bonaventure, Cardinal and General of the Franciscans. He too taught philosophy in Paris with great success. His profound learning, and yet more his fervent love of God, obtained for him the title of the "Seraphic Doctor." He died at the Council of Lyons in the year 1274, a few months after St. Thomas. Of the other men celebrated for their learning in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, it may be sufficient to

name Rupert of Deutz, Hugh and Richard of St. Victor, Peter the Lombard, Alexander Hales, and Duns Scotus. These all with great learning united deep piety and holiness of life. In silent retirement, in intimate converse with God, they sought to sharpen their intellects, and prayed with unwearied fervour for light from above. All have read of the meeting between St. Bonaventure and St. Thomas Aquinas, at which the latter asked St. Bonaventure from what books he had gained his varied learning. With a smile St. Bonaventure pointed to his crucifix and said, "All treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden here."

"But it was for the beauty of its Christian virtues, yet more than for its learning, that that age was famous; for its firm faith, its childlike simplicity, and its ardent charity towards God and man. We look to-day with awe and wonder at the great cathedrals, built by our pious forefathers, and gaze with emotion on the expression of tender and child-like piety animating the pictures which adorn the sacred structures. That religion which filled their hearts could alone have been capable of producing results so great and lovely."

What gave to the Middle Ages their special glory was the Christian spirit which then penetrated every circumstance of public and private life. It was then that unity of faith made nations happy, great, and strong. Yes, "those were good times when all Europe was one Christian land."¹ Religious strife, which at a later period rent asunder the ties which bound together the Christian nations and involved them in bloody civil wars, was then far distant; and yet further removed was the godless spirit of infidelity which in our own day breathes everywhere like an icy wind, blasting and withering the bloom of the spiritual life. It was faith, firmly grasped by the understanding and the heart, that gave to the Middle Ages their strong and noble yearning for what was high, spiritual, and divine. It was this faith that was the root of those heroic virtues which we admire in so many

¹ Novalis, "Christenheit oder Europa," a fragment, written in the year 1779.

saints of all ranks and nations.¹ This faith it was which gave birth to the wonderful enthusiasm which caused so many men during more than two centuries to sacrifice their household joys, their goods, and their lives, in endeavouring to recover the holy sepulchre where the Incarnate Son of God had lain. Everything was permeated by thoughts of man's redemption and of the mysteries of religion. We meet their influence everywhere; in every law, in every monument, and at times in every heart. From the king to the lonely hermit all felt the power of the Christian faith, which influenced more or less even the coarsest natures. John Gualbert, in his passion, was about to plunge his sword into his enemy's heart, but at the words, "For the sake of the crucified Saviour spare me," the weapon dropped from his hand. (Vol. iii. p. 81.) Duke William of Aquitaine arrogantly set himself in fierce opposition to the Church of God, and nothing could melt his obduracy; but at the sight of the Blessed Sacrament, and at the words, "Behold here the Son of God Himself, the head of that Church which thou opposest; see thy Judge, at whose name all powers in heaven as on earth bow the knee," the proud man sunk as though struck by lightning to the ground, and asked for pardon. (Vol. ii. p. 500.)

Human nature is ever corrupt, and then as now, many wicked men were to be found, and many great crimes were committed; but the deeper his fall, so much the harder generally was the penance which the sinner laid upon himself. Eberhard, the powerful Count of Berg, was given up entirely to worldliness, pride, and a wild love of battle. God's grace showed him the error of his ways, and he set off, clothed as a beggar, on pilgrimage to Rome and Compostella, to the tombs of the apostles. Not content with this penance, he hired himself as swineherd at the abbey of Morimond, crying aloud in his contrition, "Father, I have

¹ The eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries produced an especially large number of saints, a list of whom, which is, however, far from complete, is to be found in the last volume of "*Butler's Lives*."

sinned against heaven, and before thee ; I am not now worthy to be called thy son : make me as one of thy hired servants." (Vol. iii. p. 554 or 556.)

Our rude forefathers were unacquainted certainly with the elegance of speech and manner now held necessary in good society, but they were equally strangers to that falseness of mind, that hypocritical dissimulation, by reason of which men so often use language merely as a cloak to conceal their true meaning. Sincerity and love of truth were among the boasts of chivalry, as well as boldness and heroism. The prevailing character of the age is faithfully mirrored in such records, letters, tales, and legends as have come down to us. These all express a winning frankness of nature, an abhorrence of artifice, and a pious and often touching simplicity, which reveres in all human events the wonderful providence of God.¹

"It was the spirit of Christianity," says the Protestant writer Vilmar, "which had really become the spirit of the people, animating not the higher classes only, the nobles and the clergy, but thoroughly penetrating and forming an essential element in the lives of the masses. It was a joy in the Christian Church, and a pride in her interior and exterior splendour." The Church, on her side, was ever active in promoting the prosperity of the people, especially in bettering the condition of the lower orders and in mitigating the sufferings of slavery ; and her labours bore abundant fruit in the rise of the great burgher class, which continually increased in numbers, prosperity, and consideration. This class, indeed, eventually attained to such power as to be able to offer effectual resistance to the ambition of princes, and formed, together with the Church, one of the great bulwarks of true liberty. Usury, the fruitful source of all wretchedness, was forbidden by the Church, and severe ecclesiastical penalties were

¹ The Acts collected by the Bollandists afford many examples of this. We would refer only to the German translation of the life of St. Louis IX., written by his friend Joinville.

attached to it, and it was out of the hatred, moreover, with which the people also regarded it that the persecutions of the Jews, which the Church more than once had to restrain, for the most part arose. But the virtue of charity shone forth most conspicuously in those days, in the many pious foundations which were to be met with everywhere, and which abundantly compensated for the absence of our modern institutions. The documents relating to such foundations are most characteristic of the spirit of the times. They generally run thus:—"For the glory of the Ever-Blessed Trinity, in praise and honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary and all the saints, as also for the forgiveness of my sins and for the salvation of my poor soul, I bequeath so much to this hospital, church, or convent, or to such and such a pious work." When a poor pilgrim or traveller arrived at a place, he found no fine hotels certainly, but the spirit of Christian hospitality was yet prevailing, and everywhere there were hospices, open alike to rich and poor. The country too was dotted over with monasteries, which willingly relieved the wants of the poor, and in whose outlying farmhouses travellers could always obtain a ready shelter.

Lonely mountain passes were often chosen as sites for monasteries, in order that travellers might find refreshment after the toils of a difficult journey. Thus in the year 962 St. Bernard of Menthon founded a hospice on the Great St. Bernard in Switzerland, on the spot where a celebrated image of Jupiter had formerly stood. He gave it to the canons regular of St. Augustine, and the brethren, in addition to their other duties, were bound to take care of the pilgrims and travellers who crossed these bleak heights in great numbers on their way through Switzerland to Italy. In this far-famed hospice, the site of which is said to be the highest spot in the Old World on which man has ever fixed his dwelling, the most generous Christian charity has been continually exercised during the last nine hundred years. From nine thousand to ten thousand travellers on an average pass yearly, all of whom are received with the utmost kindness. Entertainment is extended gratis to rich and poor, but alms are thankfully received from such as can afford to give.¹ The duties of the monks involve the most heroic self-sacri-

¹ The present writer still remembers with the warmest gratitude the generous

fice. In these regions of perpetual snow wanderers are often lost or overwhelmed by avalanches. To seek out such the well-known breed of dogs trained for the purpose is kept at the monastery. Guided by these sagacious creatures, the monks go forth and save numbers of lives often at the risk of their own. As lately as the year 1845, three of the fathers, while on such an errand of charity, fell into a crevasse and perished. This foundation of St. Bernard of Menthon, has almost down to the present day enjoyed the favour of men and the protection of the authorities. It was reserved for the barbarous vandalism of our own times, which has destroyed so many of the institutions of Christian charity, to lay its rapacious grasp on this common refuge of all nations, and it is only with great loss that the monastery has escaped entire destruction.

Even though nothing remained to us of the Middle Ages but the beautiful churches and the huge cathedrals, which in so many places raise their spires towards heaven, and form the greatest ornaments of our towns and landscapes, would not these alone bear most speaking witness to the profound faith and religious earnestness of our forefathers—to their zeal for God's glory and their glad spirit of self-sacrifice? "If we consider," says Hurter in his life of Pope Innocent III., vol. iv. p. 668, "the number of such buildings that were begun and completed during the course of one single century, principally by bishops and their chapters, the question at once occurs to us, How was it possible? Where could the money have come from? History gives us the answer: Through cheerful co-operation, and an heroic devotion, of which faith was the motive power. He that could give nothing else could at least give himself, that is, could give his labour freely." It was, as an old chronicler says, an admirable spectacle to see men of rank, gently nurtured, drawing carts loaded with stones, lime, and wood for the sacred building. Thousands sometimes would be drawing a

and affectionate hospitality with which he and twenty of his companions were received when flying from Italy in the eventful year of 1847. It was at night-fall on the 30th of November, in the midst of a heavy snowstorm, that they reached the hospice on the Simplon, so far from any other human dwelling. The Rev. Father Prior even insisted on giving up his own bed for the accommodation of the travellers.

load together, but yet there was never the least disturbance or noise heard among them. When they rested they spoke only of their sins, which they acknowledged with tears and prayers." Many made vows for the furtherance of the work; thus the burgesses of Freiburg, when the splendid cathedral of that city, dedicated to our Blessed Lady, was in progress, vowed that the best garment of each person who died should be sold towards the expenses of the building, and they mortgaged also a number of their houses for the same object. The Gothic cathedral is essentially a product of Christianity. It is a development of the Christian spirit, which same spirit it again reacts in fostering and preserving. High, mysterious, reaching towards heaven, its very structure speaks powerfully to our souls. "These bold lofty pillars," writes a critic, "these graceful intersecting arches, seem as though they would bear our prayers upward to the Eternal Father; one would fain exclaim with Jacob, 'This is no other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven.'" ¹ "Here the very stones cry out, 'Sursum corda.'" ²

Besides architecture, all the other arts attained in the service of the Church to a truly wonderful perfection. Such were sculpture, glass and oil painting, wood inlaying, casting, and gold and silver work. Not only altars, reliquaries, and sacred vessels, but also the doors, pulpits, and stalls of churches, were decorated with fine gold and silver work, or with exquisite carvings. Of the doors of the cathedral of Pisa, cast in the year 1180, Michael Angelo said that they were worthy to be the gates of Paradise. But what chiefly distinguishes all the art productions of the period, is their purely Christian character. The creations of the old artists were all drawn from the depths of their pure and pious souls, and it is for this reason that they possess so undescribable a beauty. It is related of that famous master of Christian art, the blessed Dominican Fra Angelico, who died in 1455,

¹ Heideloff, "*Bauhütte des Mittelalters.*"

² Dursch, "*Aesthetik der christlichen bildenden Kunst.*"

that he never took his brush in his hand until he had prepared himself by prayer for his work. And when he painted our Lord upon the cross, he did so upon his knees, weeping and smiting his breast. Though with such fearful earnestness he set forth the terrors of the last judgment, and the despair of the damned, he was able to throw such an expression of love and heavenly peace into the faces of his angels, that one would think angels must really, as was said, have visited his cell and lived with him in familiar companionship.¹ Whilst pre-Christian art had delighted in the perfect delineation of physical beauty, Christian art strove after the expression of sweetness, gentleness, and tender love and purity; and the high perfection which it attained in so doing gives to its productions that magical influence which they yet exercise, on all minds susceptible to impressions of innocence and virtue. As was the case with sculpture and painting, so poetry too, from the religious spirit of the times, acquired that exalted beauty which we admire both in the Latin and the German hymns. It was between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries that those glorious hymns, the "Pange Lingua," the "Dies Iræ," and the "Stabat Mater" were composed, which, with many others of the same date, are most wonderful for their power, their fervour of devotion, and their simplicity and tenderness.² Within the same period too, the famous Minnesingers, Walter von der Vogelweide, and Wolfrain von Eschenbach, flourished in Germany; and in Italy the princes of Italian poetry, Dante and Petrarch. It was in the "Divina Comedia" of the latter that Christian poetry attained its greatest triumph. This poem describes, as in a vision, the condition of souls after death. It is divided into three parts, treating of Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise, each of which consists of thirty-three cantos, and throughout the whole are set forth, beneath symbolical imagery, both the fundamental

¹ See Brunner, the "Kunstgenossen der Klosterzelle," pp. 88-159.

² Many are given in the Freiburg Kirchen Lexicon: Article, "Poesie Christilche."

ideas of Christianity and the most profound religious and philosophical truths.¹

“Religion again, gave to the world a most priceless blessing, in the religious orders founded by St. Romuald, St. Bruno, St. Norbert, St. Bernard (died 1153), St. Dominic (died 1221), St. Francis of Assisi, named the ‘Seraphic’ (died 1226), and many others of God’s servants. The monasteries which they established not only brought forth great saints and skilful shepherds of souls, but nourished piety and zeal among the people, ministered to their necessities, cared for the sick, and redeemed the slaves and captives. From them missionaries went forth to all parts of the world, and their inmates, through pious supplications, drew down God’s blessing on all peoples and countries.”

The Church showed a wonderful vitality in the creation and development of new religious orders. These in part adhered strictly to the Benedictine rule, adding to it fresh obligations, and in part, with the approbation of the Holy See, chose for themselves another rule suited to the needs of the age, led a different life, and made use of different means for the attainment of the same end, namely, the glory of God and the bodily or spiritual good of their neighbour. Previous to that zeal for the liberation of the Holy Sepulchre, which when kindled throughout the West, inspired it to such daring deeds, many hearts had felt the longing to follow the example of the fathers of the desert in renouncing all earthly pleasures, and devoting themselves to prayer and solitude. Thus had arisen the orders of the Camaldoli, the Vallombrosans, and the Carthusians. St. Romuald, born 952, of a ducal house, founded the first of these orders in the year 1012. He retired to the wilderness to expiate in penance the errors of his youth, and then founded a monastery at Camaldoli, a place on a craggy height in the Apennines, surrounded by steep rocks, and there led with his disciples a life of austere contemplation. His order was divided into Cenobites, living in ordinary monasteries; hermits, who passed their lives in “Lauras;” and recluses, who, having once entered their cells, never again quitted them. The life of St.

¹ Upon its scope and signification see an article by Clemens in the “*Katholik*,” January 1864.

Romuald in Camaldoli, was, according to the testimony of St. Peter Damian, one of continual fast and penance. But notwithstanding his austerity, he was ever of a joyous and cheerful countenance, and gentle and affectionate to all his disciples. His order soon spread from Italy into France and Germany. At the same time the order of the Vallombrosans was formed by St. John Gualbert, of whose great victory over himself we have already made mention. It was thus named from the densely wooded valley in the Apennines, where his first monastery was built, and which was named Vallombrosa ("shady valley"). St. Bruno was a member of an ancient and noble family of Cologne. He was highly honoured and loaded with ecclesiastical dignities on account of his learning and sanctity; but in the year 1084 he withdrew himself with a few devout companions, to the wild desert of Chartreuse, three leagues beyond Grenoble, and there built a few wooden huts and an oratory, in order that, far from the world, he might serve God day and night in prayer and penance. This was the origin of the Carthusian order, which soon attained great fame. All of these orders were devoted to the contemplative life, which they followed amidst hard watchings and fastings, manual toil and religious silence. They lived perfectly secluded from the world, content with that consolation which was secured to them by purity of heart and the hope of eternal life. The words used by Cardinal Bona, in speaking of the Carthusians, apply equally to all:—"These religious," he says, "are the wonder of the world; they live in the flesh as if they had none; they are angels on earth, who reproduce before our eyes the life of the holy Baptist in the desert; they are eagles, who wing their flight directly towards heaven." Although their great aim was their own individual sanctification and perfection, the services they rendered to mankind at large should by no means be overlooked. They planted beautiful woods upon the barren mountains, bridged over chasms, dammed the courses of torrents, made roads, introduced trades, and wrote books. Besides setting before the world an example of the most

exalted virtues, they gave it that also of persevering industry in the cultivation and improvement of the country. These silent cloisters too, were the schools in which so many men renowned for wisdom and sanctity ripened to perfection, and where so many holy bishops and dignitaries laid the foundations of their future greatness. It is but lately that the Church was wisely and powerfully ruled by one who had been a monk of the Camaldoli, Gregory XVI. namely, before whose bold words even the proudest of northern monarchs bent his head in shame.

All that has been said of the three abovementioned orders, applies also and in a special manner to that of the Cistercians or Bernardines. The thick and well-watered forest of Citeaux, near Dijon, served as the cradle of this order. In the year 1098 St. Robert had retired thither with a few companions, desirous of continuing the holy life which he had been leading hitherto in other desert places. The order seemed on the point of dying out under its second abbot, St. Stephen Harding, when, just at its lowest ebb, God's providence sent St. Bernard, then in his twenty-third year, with thirty noble companions, who all desired admission as novices.¹ From this day dates the prosperity of Citeaux. Soon it came to be called a "bright light" upon the mountains, the admiration of men and the joy of the angels. "There is but one desire," wrote Richard, Archbishop of Canterbury, "that I yet cherish, and that is of finding myself once more in your holy society. Oh, home, truly to be longed after! Oh, most reverend company! O Citeaux, how splendid is thy house, how blessed thy children, how does thy tongue sing praises, how beautiful art thou among the nations!" The monastery was besieged on all sides with requests for new foundations, and the number of those who begged admittance was so great that one house did not suffice to contain them. Fresh ones, therefore, were founded, and to each was sent a party of

¹ For the departure of St. Bernard from his father's castle, see vol. i. p. 11 or 13.

twelve monks with a superior. At the head of one of these holy companies was St. Bernard, who had then completed his twenty-fifth year. The marshy valley of Wermuththal ("valley of wormwood"), near Langres, was chosen for the site of his monastery. He changed its name to "Clairvaux," or "bright valley," and the house which he there built, attained, through the greatness of its founder and the sanctity of its monks, to an almost unequalled celebrity. Fresh postulants, mostly of noble birth, daily increased the number of its inmates. Men who held influential positions in the world, who had distinguished themselves in science or in war, exchanged at Clairvaux their earthly greatness for the imperishable glory of God's servants, and gave to the world a most wonderful example of virtue.

We cannot refrain from here giving a few passages from an extremely beautiful letter of one of these monks, Peter of Roya, who forsook a high position in the world to place himself under the guidance of St. Bernard. "Although," he says, "the monastery of Clairvaux lies in a valley, yet are its foundations on the holy mountains. Here God is wonderfully shown forth, and works great things for the glory of His name; here fools learn wisdom; here the interior man is renewed as the exterior man is cast off; here the proud become humble, the rich become poor, and the darkness of sin is dissipated by the operation of divine light. Here, among so many men gathered together from such various countries, there is but one heart and one soul. All are perpetually gladdened with the hope of eternal blessedness, the foretaste of which is given to them even in this life. . . . Among them I see a Godfrey of Peronne, a William of St. Omer, and many other great men whom I once knew in the world, but who now no longer let a trace of their former condition appear, for then they carried their heads on high, though they were but graves full of dead bones, whilst now they are holy vessels, containing in themselves the treasures of all Christian virtues."

St. Bernard, by whom the Cistercian order was raised to such eminence, is himself one of the most remarkable characters in the history of the Church. "He united in himself," as Huter well says, "the qualities of the most perfect contemplative monk with those of the most profound politician. Whilst in one place his burning words are inciting nations to do battle for the faith, in another quarrels are being healed, and armed men let fall their swords at

his admonition. His judgment decides who is the rightful successor of Peter; and he it is who shields the Church from new dangers engendered by rash teaching. Popes follow his counsels like humble monks. He is offered and refuses bishoprics and archbishoprics; but wherever he appears greater honours are shown to him than to the bishops and archbishops of the most famous sees. And all is due to his humility, to his boundless love towards men, to his fear of God and his devotion to the Church. He was glorified by God during his life through great miracles, attested by the multitudes in whose presence they were performed, and after his death honoured as a saint in the Church, and numbered, on account of the value of his writings, with her fathers and doctors. The Cistercians regard him as their second founder, and hence their name of Bernardines.

About the same time, 1120, St. Norbert founded the Order of Premonstratensians. He was by birth a wealthy nobleman of Santen, on the Rhine, and in possession, besides, of rich benefices. One day a flash of lightning entered the ground close to him and struck him to the earth. This so terrified him that he resolved at once to begin a different life. (See vol. i. p. 27 or 28.) He gave up his livings, divided his goods among the poor, and travelled on foot through France, preaching penance. His words made a deep impression, and wherever he came men were moved to repentance. After this he founded a monastery in the wild valley of Prémontré, near Laon, where with his companions, he followed the rule of St. Augustine, to which he joined study, the office of preaching, and the care of souls. Thus arose the Order of Premonstratensians, who have rendered such good service to the Church. It subsequently extended itself throughout the whole Christian world, and its labours were especially blessed in Germany and the countries of Northern Europe. The holy founder died Archbishop of Magdeburg, a dignity which he most unwillingly accepted, and in which he altered nothing of his manner of life, but from his new eminence continued constantly to admonish men of the nothingness of earthly things and the greatness of eternity.

Through the wars with the Mahometans and the depredations of pirates, numbers of Christians became enslaved by

the unbelievers. In this condition they not only suffered great hardships, but were in much danger also of losing their faith. Let us see to what sacrifices Christian charity was in these times equal. In the year 1198 St. John of Matha and St. Felix of Valois founded the Order of the Trinitarians, for the redemption of Christian slaves. The order was confirmed by Pope Innocent III., and its members received contributions from all sides for the carrying out of their noble purpose. St. John himself undertook many journeys into the countries of the infidels, in which he was exposed to much danger and suffering. On one occasion, after having with immense pains and labour freed a hundred and twenty slaves, he escaped as by a miracle from certain death. The infidels, in their anger, deprived his vessel of its sails and rudder, and left it on the open sea. But the saint, trusting in God, besought help from on high, and then, spreading his own and his companions' cloaks for sails, sang psalms, holding the cross in his hand. A favourable wind sprang up, and in a few days brought the ship into the port of Ostia. For the same object St. Peter Nolasco founded the Order of "Our Lady of Mercy for the Redemption of Captives," in the year 1223. It was instituted under the patronage of the King of Arragon and with the co-operation of St. Raymund of Pennafort, and was approved in 1230 by Gregory IX. Its members not only vowed all their possessions, but themselves also when necessary, for the redemption of captives. Among the many who voluntarily remained as hostages for others in the hands of the infidels was St. Raymund Nonnatus; he endured an imprisonment of eight months, during which time he underwent frightful sufferings. Holes were bored through his lips with a hot iron, and a lock placed upon his mouth, to hinder him from preaching. Between the years 1492 and 1691 this order alone set free 16,947 Christian slaves (*Hist. Polit. Bl.*, vol. lxii. p. 185).

At this time many new orders arose, and many already existing attained their greatest development. Amongst others the Carmelites, Augustinians, Servites, Antonites, Celestines, Brigittines, &c.

It would take too much space to give even the shortest account of their origin and their blessed labours. Of two however, the Dominican and Franciscan orders namely, special mention must be made, for with their wonderful spread and activity begins a new era in the history of the Church. Both are distinguished from the earlier orders, first, by their object, which was to unite a life of contemplation with an active course of teaching and preaching; and, secondly, by their rule, which enjoined that not the individual members only, but the communities also, should live entirely on alms, for which reason they are called the "Mendicant" or begging orders. If we inquire why it was at this time that God raised up these two orders, we shall find an answer to our question in the necessities of the age. Poverty and humility, self-denial and obedience, were the lessons which these orders most powerfully preached, and the enemy against whom they were called on to fight has been, and will be, so long as the world lasts, ever the same—the spirit, namely, of pride, ambition, and covetousness, the spirit of this world, which is opposed to the spirit of the sons of God. The great increase of trade and commerce had been the means of developing this spirit among the faithful; and in addition to this, another danger of a special kind was now threatening the Church. Men had arisen who made her external splendour a matter of reproach to her, and who separated themselves from her communion under a pretence of superior sanctity. They declared the Church to be sinful and corrupt, condemned her authority, cast off the priesthood and the sacraments, and easily deluded unwary people by their outward show of poverty and austerity. To crush these dangerous errors, and to check the proud sectarian spirit which was rising within the Church, apostolic men were needed, who should seek by word and example to win back the erring, and who to outward austerity of life should unite the most perfect faith and loyalty to the Church. Such men, God who abides ever with His Church, now sent her by means of the two orders founded by St. Dominic and St. Francis. At the rise and labours of these orders we will now briefly glance.

St. Dominic was born at Calaroga, in Spain, in the year 1170. He early gave proof of the high destiny for which God had chosen him. When studying at the University of Valencia he once sold his books during a famine for the relief of the poor. On another occasion he was so much affected by the grief of a mother whose son was languishing in captivity among the Moors, that in default of other ransom he offered himself as a substitute. When he had finished his studies he

zealously devoted himself to the office of preaching, confirming the faithful, and bringing back those who had erred. Everything—his way of life, his manner of preaching, his dealings with other men—all showed Dominic to be a true apostle of Christ. Severe with himself, poor and humble, walking barefooted through the country, none could yet vie with him in his tenderness for others. He was once asked whence he drew his sermons. "Out of the book of Love," he answered; "all learning is to be found therein." Satan, the author of all heresies, he believed might best be overcome through earnest prayer to her of whom the Church says in her liturgy, that "she alone is able to destroy all heresies throughout the whole world." For this reason he laboured with the greatest zeal to spread the devotion of the Rosary. (See vol. iv. pp. 809-812.) Innocent III., in his care for the conversion of heretics, sent him as apostolic missionary to the south of France, where heresy most prevailed. What perfect devotion to his holy calling, and what entire trust in God, must have been required in one who was to follow in the steps of Peter of Castelnau, whom Innocent III. had already sent thither, and who had been maliciously murdered by the heretics! But Dominic, like Paul, reckoned his life as nothing if so he could consecrate it to the salvation of souls. He saw well however, that for the accomplishment of the work which he had set before him nothing would be so efficacious as a great spiritual association, which would devote itself entirely to this end; and it being God's pleasure to lead to him men who were desirous of joining themselves to him for this purpose, he exerted himself to obtain the confirmation of the new society from the head of the Church. This was granted by Honorius III. in the year 1216, in the expectation, as he said, that "the brethren would be pioneers of the faith and true lights of the world." Owing to the office of preaching having been specially imposed upon the new order, it has since been called the "Order of Friars Preachers." The great aim set before them by their holy founder was that they should labour constantly for the spiritual welfare of mankind, especially through

their zeal for the true faith and by the instruction of the people through preaching. Knowing well, as he did by experience, how little human eloquence could do for the souls of men unless powerfully supported by an example of heroic virtue, he made obligatory to the order a life of complete poverty and self-renunciation; and at its first general assembly at Bologna, in 1220, he passed a decree that no property whatever, whether bestowed as a gift or as a legacy, was to be accepted by it. He himself rejected large gifts of land and destroyed the deeds conveying them in presence of the bishops. At the next general assembly in the following year, the order already numbered sixty convents. A short time afterwards, as St. Dominic was preparing to go to preach the Gospel to the Jazyges, then held to be the most barbarous of all heathen nations, death overtook him at Bologna on the 6th of August 1221. His last words to his sons were, "Have charity, preserve humility, and never part from voluntary poverty."

The order of St. Dominic spread everywhere. In all countries the zeal of the people was rekindled by the preaching of his sons. Amidst the most terrible sufferings and privations, they carried Christianity into the very heart of Asia. The extent to which their missions had attained in the East so early as the year 1252, may be gathered from the dedication of a Brief addressed by Pope Innocent IV. to "his beloved sons, the Friars Preachers, who are preaching the Gospel to the Saracens, Greeks, Bulgarians, Comani, Syrians, Goths, Jacobites, Armenians, Indians, Tartars, Hungarians, and other unbelievers of the East." Among the missionaries of the Dominican order who preached the Gospel in the north and east, St. Hyacinth is conspicuous, both for his heroism in his apostolic calling, and for his wonderful gift of miracles. He was a member of one of the oldest and most famous houses of Silesia, and together with several Poles, and two German nobles, he joined the new order of St. Dominic in Rome in the year 1218, and received the habit from the hands of its holy founder. Wherever this

great apostle came, idolatry vanished away before the Gospel light. He founded numerous schools and convents, and preached in Bohemia, Poland, Prussia, Denmark, Sweden, and Russia, where at that time heathenism still lingered. He even pushed his way to Greater Tartary, Thibet, and Cathay, the most northern province of China. He died in 1257, in the seventy-second year of his age, and after his death, as during his life, was glorified by many miracles. Whilst the missionaries and preachers were announcing the Gospel with such success both to Christians and heathen, many of their brethren were labouring as professors and teachers in the universities and public schools. Many of these, such, for instance, as Albert the Great and his famous pupil, St. Thomas Aquinas, were renowned not only among their contemporaries but have continued to inform successive ages by the light of their angelical science. Since we have already spoken of the cultivation of learning in the Middle Ages, we will only here add that the order of St. Dominic rendered good service in its promotion; and it can boast, too, of having contributed to the Church eight hundred bishops, one hundred and fifty archbishops, sixty cardinals, and four popes, besides having given many great saints to Heaven. The Dominican order for women also grew and flourished; and its members, by strict seclusion and silent prayer, secured their own salvation, furthered the best interests of mankind, and peopled heaven with saints. Most beneficial too to the world was the Third Order, which was founded by St. Dominic for people living in the world, and which imposed on its members the care of their own perfection, the service of their neighbour, and the exercise of good works. St. Catherine of Siena and St. Rose of Lima both belonged to it. Of the two glorious stars which in the beginning of the thirteenth century rose in the firmament of the Church and spread their beneficent rays throughout all Christendom, the second was the great St. Francis. He was born of wealthy parents at Assisi in Italy, in the year 1182. God who purifies the souls of His elect by sufferings, prepared

that of Francis by heavy trials for the great work for which He destined him. He was taken prisoner during a war between his native city and the neighbouring town of Perugia. When, after a year, he was set free, God sent him a painful illness, seeking thereby to render him more docile to the divine inspirations. In this school of trial and humiliation Francis became entirely changed; he learned to die to the world, and lost all taste for its joys and possessions; from thenceforth he listened only to the voice of grace, which was making itself so clearly heard within him, and gave himself up, with all the energy of his soul, to communion with God and to prayer. Once as he was praying for a long time in a cave, Christ appeared to him hanging on the cross, and the sight so filled him with compassion that he never could think of it without tears. His heart burned with the desire to lead, like Jesus, a life of poverty and suffering. One day as he was assisting at Mass in the church of St. Mary of the Angels at Assisi, he heard these words of the Gospel:—"Carry neither gold, nor silver, nor money in your girdles, and no scrip in your way, nor two coats, nor a staff." "This is what I seek," he cried, "this is what I desire with my whole heart!" He at once gave up the small pittance which he still possessed, laid aside his staff and shoes, clad himself in a coarse, rough garment, with a rope for a girdle, and preached penance and detachment to his fellow-citizens. Many disciples soon gathered round this inspired preacher of evangelical poverty. Their numbers induced Francis to draw up for them a common rule of life, which he submitted to the Pope for approval. (See vol. iii. p. 748 or 751.) From Rome, where his rule was confirmed by Innocent III. in the year 1209, he went with his followers to Portiuncula, a little piece of land where stood the chapel of St. Mary of the Angels. Here from henceforth he lived with his brethren, in the faithful exercise of poverty, humility, and prayer. From thence his disciples went forth as heralds of the faith, and filled with the power of God, preached in the towns and villages. The poor house where they dwelt with their

holy founder was the seminary from which the Franciscan Order rapidly spread throughout the whole Christian world. At the second general chapter, held at Pentecost A.D. 1219, brethren were present from all parts of Christendom to the number of more than five thousand. The convent of St. Mary of the Angels was soon by far too small, and they built around it little huts of rushes and straw, and from thence the pious sound of prayers and hymns arose, so that on hearing them Cardinal Ugolino exclaimed, "Truly this is the camp of God!" Nearly five hundred novices desired admittance; five missionaries of the order had already shed their blood in Morocco, and others were being sent to Africa, Greece, England, and Hungary. St. Francis himself, full of ardent longing for the crown of martyrdom, went with twelve of the brothers to Syria, and boldly preached the faith in the Saracen camp. (See vol. i. p. 154.) Under divine guidance he returned to Italy, and travelled through the towns and villages of Umbria and Tuscany, arousing men everywhere by his words and his miracles, and converting them to God. The heart of Francis daily grew in divine love. His devotion to the bitter passion of our Lord was in particular rewarded by God with a most wonderful grace. On the morning of the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross in the year 1224, as he was praying on the Mount Alverno, a seraph imprinted upon him the marks of the Five Holy Wounds, which remained visible until his death, and from which blood flowed abundantly. After a life consumed entirely in the exercise of love towards God and man, and which was indeed but one continued miracle of grace, Francis died at Portiuncula on the 4th of October 1226, in the forty-fifth year of his age, ardently longing to be with God, and recommending his brethren to His grace.

The order of "Friars Minors," as the Franciscans were called, continued to spread with increasing rapidity. In 1264, thirty-eight years after the death of its holy founder, it already counted 33 provinces, above 8000 houses, and more than 200,000 members. It is impossible to estimate

the good wrought, and the influence brought to bear upon others, by this great army of the champions of the Cross, whose lives were wholly devoted to the service of God and of their neighbour. Not only in Christian lands did they labour to win back men from sin and error, protecting and guiding countless souls to heaven, but they made their way among the heathen also, and there is scarcely a land which does not bear tokens of their labours, or which has not been watered by their blood. The celebrated Franciscan, John of Monte Corvino, forced his way to Peking, the capital of China, where he baptized many thousands, built a church, and died in 1330, sixteen years after having been made Archbishop of Peking by Clement V. Well deserved was the praise given by the wise Pope Pius II. to the sons of St. Francis. "They are," he said, "the most chosen body of men in the holy warfare; they are to be found always in the forefront of the Christian army, defending, now one point, now another, averting surprises, bearing the brunt of the enemy's attack, always armed, always watchful, in order that we may be at peace. Through the whole of Christendom they are everywhere." St. Anthony of Padua is especially famous among the apostles of this order. Great eloquence, surpassing sanctity, and the most wonderful gift of miracles, were united in him, and at his preaching the most hardened sinners were moved and melted to tears. In the sudden conversion of the barbarous prince Ezzelino we have a remarkable instance of this kind. This prince had for fifteen years ravaged Lombardy with barbarous cruelty, and he paid no heed to the excommunications which three popes had pronounced against him. When Anthony appeared before his throne and delivered him his solemn message from God, the guards expected nothing less than that the saint would pay dearly for his boldness. Ezzelino however, overcome as he said by the supernatural light which shone from the holy man, descended from his throne, and putting a rope round his own neck, fell on his knees before Anthony and implored him to beg God's forgiveness for his sins. St. Anthony preached in Italy, France, and

Spain. Where the church was not large enough, he would erect his pulpit in an open square or in a field. On account of his unceasing warfare with heresy, he was named "the continual hammer of heretics." Pope Gregory IX., who was present in Rome at one of his sermons, called him, in admiration, "the ark of the covenant." He even in his lifetime was honoured as a saint, and after his death, which took place at Padua on the 13th of June 1231, in his thirty-seventh year, the children ran crying through the streets, "The saint is dead!" His tomb was ever and is still the scene of many miracles. When, in 1263, his relics were removed to the splendid church built in his honour, all the flesh was found to be consumed except the tongue, which showed no sign of decomposition.

In the domain of learning, too, the sons of St. Francis may worthily take place beside those of St. Dominic. In the great universities thousands of scholars listened with admiration to the words of wisdom which flowed from the lips of Franciscan teachers. Such were Alexander of Hales, St. Bonaventure, Duns Scotus, and others of their contemporaries, who were famed and honoured during their lifetime, and have left behind them an immortal name. The order has given to the Church five popes, forty-five cardinals, many bishops, and very many saints and martyrs. Besides the order for men, St. Francis gave his rule also to another order for women. When in the year 1212 St. Clare laid aside her worldly attire and received the habit of penance from the hands of St. Francis, many other maidens soon joined her, who, inspired by the Holy Spirit, desired to follow his rule. The order so formed, which was at first called that of "Poor Women," and afterwards the Order of St. Clare, flourished and increased greatly, until at last it numbered 25,000 virgins consecrated to God's service. In addition to these two, St. Francis saw the necessity of a third order. There were many who ardently desired to place themselves under his rule, who yet were bound by indissoluble ties to the world; and for the needs of such the holy man provided help. In

1221 he drew up a rule compatible with every state, which, when followed, protected secular life from its many dangers, enabled it to arrive at Christian perfection, and made it such as to be a pattern to other men. The "Third Order," as it was called, was welcomed in all countries with incredible eagerness, numbers everywhere counting it a great gain thus to share whilst living in the world the privileges and graces of the religious state. St. Louis of France and St. Elizabeth of Hungary both belonged to this order.

SECTION XLII.

BARBARISM AND TURBULENCE OF THE MIDDLE AGES—QUARRELS OF
INVESTITURE—HERESIES—PREACHERS OF PENANCE—PIOUS CON-
GREGATIONS AND REFORMS—HUMANISTS—WESTERN SCHISM.

"Meanwhile cockle grew up with the good seed in the field of God (Matt. xiii.) There were terrible wars and feuds, and all sorts of crimes, tyrannical acts, and oppressions."

It cannot be denied, that with much that is good and beautiful which the Middle Ages present to our view, we encounter also many outbursts of wild passion, and many traits of violence and barbarism. In the sturdy, resolute, and active men of those times both good and evil quickly developed itself to the utmost. The public safety was often endangered by rapine and bloody feuds. When in the ninth and tenth centuries the wild hordes of Northmen and Magyars invaded the land and devastated all before them, the great land-owners, the dukes and counts, had built strongholds, fortified with deep moats and high towers, on the hills and craggy heights, for the protection of themselves and their vassals; and now, should a weak king find himself at the head of a nation, a rebellion would frequently break out among the nobles, and they would intercept and plunder travellers who passed near their mountain fastnesses, and exercise violence towards their less powerful neighbours. Envy, jealousy,

and desire of conquest fanned the discords of the great feudal lords into open strife, and whole provinces resounded with the din of internecine feud and civil war. The interests of powerful families were often at variance, and this was ground enough for a bitter feud which would be transmitted from father to son for generations. What power was there that could quell this disorder? The king often saw himself forsaken by the great nobles, and the evil was but too deeply rooted, especially in the nature of the warlike Germans, with whom the custom of blood-feuds and the privilege of avenging family wrongs was hereditary. Even now a vestige of this barbarism still survives in spite of all the prohibitions of Church and State, in the practice of duelling. In such a state of things we recognise with gratitude the beneficent influence of the Catholic Church. She it was who tamed these rude spirits, and more than once hindered the threatened return of former barbarism. At the Reichstag at Constance in 1043, the Emperor Henry III. in vain endeavoured to establish a general peace. The Church was forced to lend her authority to confirm his enactments, and it was then settled that from Wednesday evening till Monday morning, from the first day of Advent till eight days after Epiphany, and from the beginning of Lent until eight days after Pentecost, all feuds were to cease, under pain of the Church's ban; while for priests, monks, nuns, merchants, women, pilgrims, and peasants, this peace was to last all the year through. This "Truce of God," as it was called, prevented countless crimes, introduced milder and gentler manners, and placed as much of restraint as it was then able to bear, on the turbulent spirit of the age.

"In the eleventh century a tedious dispute arose concerning investiture. It began by the misguided Emperor Henry IV. giving away, or even selling, according to his humour, bishoprics and abbeys to the most unfit persons. This abuse was boldly opposed by the Sovereign Pontiff, but it was only after a long struggle that the Church was victorious."

It is not within our compass to give all the particulars of a strife which continued for half a century between the Church and the secular powers. Enough only must be said

to show that the Church was contending for her indefeasible rights, and that it was through God's unmistakable help alone that she conquered. When the Western princes entered the Church, the dispositions of many had led them to endow her generously, and they had presented large tracts of land in fee simple to bishops and abbots, who in this manner acquired seigniorial rights. By degrees, however, the secular rulers laid claim to confer these rights as on their lay vassals, so too on bishops and abbots, by, in the case of the latter, the solemn presentation of the ring and pastoral staff. This custom led to the worst results; for the ring and the staff being in themselves the symbols of spiritual dignity and jurisdiction, and the difference between the sign and the thing signified not being in that age readily understood, the idea thence arose that princes possessed the right and power of conferring, not the temporal possessions only, but the spiritual office as well. A yet worse evil too was involved. The disposal of bishoprics lay, to the great prejudice of the Church, entirely in the hands of the secular rulers, who bestowed them according to their pleasure in defiance of all ecclesiastical law, and often, indeed, shamelessly sold vacant sees to the highest bidder. A bishop who had thus purchased his rights with money, would not, it may be well supposed, be scrupulous in again selling both orders and benefices. Since no conscientious Christian could enter the sanctuary by means of the crime of simony, the ecclesiastical charges and benefices therefore became filled by unworthy clerics, who, instead of feeding Christ's sheep, caused them grievous scandal, and disregarded continually the Church's rule with respect to the celibacy of the priesthood. The state of things was a most miserable one. The Church, the free spouse of Christ, was held in captivity by godless oppressors and loaded with shameful chains; her children, redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, were deprived of her motherly care and protection, and committed to faithless hirelings!

Meanwhile God, the constant Protector of His Church, was

preparing for her a great victory over her oppressors. Just when the abuses of which we have spoken were at their height, especially in Germany and Lombardy, Pope Gregory VII. occupied the chair of Peter. This great pontiff possessed both the wisdom to perceive, and the will to apply firmly, the remedies necessary for healing the wounds of the Church. At a council held in Rome in 1074, he passed stringent laws against simony, and decreed that no one should retain an ecclesiastical charge which had been purchased for money. He strictly enforced the ancient rule of clerical celibacy, and ordered that no priest who was either married or living an unchaste life should venture to exercise his sacred functions; and should any sacrilegiously do so, the faithful were forbidden to in every way avail themselves of their ministrations. These ordinances, as Gregory had foreseen, led him into a hard struggle with such offenders as were unwilling to conform to them. He did not, however, shun a contest which was demanded by his own duty and by the most sacred interests of the Church. Firmly trusting in God, he prohibited in a council held the following year in Rome another abuse which really lay at the root of the whole evil—the investiture, namely, of bishops and other ecclesiastical dignitaries by secular princes. This he now forbade under pain of excommunication. Before taking this step, Gregory with prudent care sought to win over the German Emperor Henry IV. by kind and paternal admonitions; and Henry had promised amendment. Now, however, he set himself in open opposition to the papal decrees. He continued to confer ecclesiastical offices on unworthy persons by the presentation of the ring and staff; and so great was the sacrilegious profanity of his court that his mistresses might be seen decked with jewels taken from the sacred vessels. Complaints of such scandals, and of the oppression of the people, reached the Pope. He refused however to judge the offender unheard, and summoned Henry to appear before a council of bishops in Rome to answer for his conduct. The Emperor mocked at the summons, and himself held an assembly of

unworthy prelates at Worms, by which he declared the Pope deposed, and to inform him of this decision, wrote an abusive letter, addressed "To Hildebrand, no Pope, but a false monk." It was impossible for Gregory to pass over this insult in silence, and he therefore, whilst compassionating the Emperor's unhappy blindness, pronounced sentence of excommunication against him, and absolved his vassals from their allegiance until he should show himself truly sorry for his crime. Henry at first paid no heed to the Church's censure; but as its consequences made themselves felt, his determination began to give way. His earlier supporters gradually left him. The princes of the empire assembled at Tribur, and drew up a declaration in which they told him that "his wickedness and treachery were notorious, and that he had been treated with too much patience; that nevertheless they would not attempt to decide in the affair, but would abide by the judgment of the Pope; that it was however, an ancient law of the empire that when the King had been a year excommunicated without seeking to obtain absolution, he thereby forfeited for ever his right to the throne." Intimidated at last, Henry, to ward off the threatened danger, crossed the Alps in the middle of winter to beg the Pope's release from the censure of the Church. This Gregory granted to him at Canossa in 1077, after he had performed a three days' penance,¹ and undertaken to abide in future by the Pope's decisions. He let himself however, on his

¹ Public penances such as this, even in the case of kings, were not infrequent, and were in accordance with the customs and Church discipline of the times. Like Theodosius the Great at an earlier period, kings and emperors still often publicly performed severe penances. This was the case with the Emperor Ludwig I., and again later with Otto the Great, who did penance barefoot before the Bishop of Halberstadt to obtain release from excommunication; and so too with Robert II. of France, Swegn, King of Denmark, and many others. One of the most truthful chroniclers of the time, Berthold of Constance, states that the Emperor Henry IV. offered of himself to perform this penance. The Pope, however, who on account of his known treachery and levity, had every reason to mistrust him, retired within the fortress of Canossa. But after the Emperor had performed the penance, he received him, and with a fatherly admonition pronounced the absolution.

return be influenced by the vicious nobles of Lombardy, who hated Gregory because he had condemned their simony and other crimes; and supported by them, again assumed a threatening attitude towards the Pope, and hindered the journey which the latter was about to have taken into Germany to restore order. The German princes now elected Rudolph of Swabia for their king, although the Pope had counselled them against this step. A fearful civil war broke forth. All the simoniacal bishops and abbots were on the side of Henry. His troops committed dreadful atrocities, broke into churches, and profaned sanctuaries. The Pope endeavoured by all means to bring the Emperor to a better mind and to effect a reconciliation. At last, and only after all his pains had been unavailing, he again, at a council held in Rome A.D. 1080, pronounced on him sentence of excommunication and deposition. Upon this Henry called an assembly of rebellious bishops, and caused them to elect as Antipope Gregory's most implacable enemy. He then marched with an army upon Rome itself, and took the city after a three years' siege. But the Pope, shut up within the Castle of St. Angelo, had no thought of yielding. In this extremity Robert Guiscard, the brave Duke of Normandy, came to his aid, and Henry was forced to withdraw his forces. Pope Gregory retired to Salerno, where he died in 1085. Before his death he solemnly declared that it was in defence of the right only that he had entered on the struggle. Gregory VII., whom the Church honours as a saint, did not live to see his cause victorious; but he had with unshaken courage trodden the path which, being followed by his successors, led them at last to triumph in the battle which they were fighting in behalf of God's Church.

Henry IV. persevered to the end in his evil course. He died at Liège, in 1106, a fugitive and deprived of his crown. His son, Henry V., who at first had been favourable to the interests of the Church, before long showed a quite altered disposition. He claimed the right of investiture of bishops, persecuted the Pope unremittingly, at one time making

him a prisoner together with the cardinals, and thus drew down on himself the sentence of excommunication. He continued at variance with the Church under the three following Popes, Paschal II., Gelasius II., and Calixtus II., opposing them both by force and cunning. The charitable admonitions and prayers of the latter however, at last prevailed on him to come to an agreement, the terms of which were very favourable to the Church. This treaty was concluded at Worms in the year 1122. Its most important article ran thus:—“The Emperor delivers up to God, St. Peter, and the Catholic Church, the investiture by ring and staff; grants liberty of election to the spirituality throughout his realm; promises support and aid in all emergencies to the Roman Church; and that the tenure of crown lands shall henceforth be conferred with the sceptre of the realm only.” This treaty, called the Calixtian Treaty, or the Treaty of Worms, was solemnly read before a large concourse of people on the banks of the Rhine, and was hailed with delight by all good men.

“False teachers too arose, who fanned the flame of rebellion, first against the spiritual and then against the temporal powers; such were in France the Albigenses, the Waldenses in North Italy, the Wickliffites in England, and the Hussites in Bohemia.”

Meanwhile, the complete unanimity in matters of belief which during the Middle Ages prevailed throughout Western Christendom, moved the envy of the devil, and made him seek to falsify or destroy that faith which is the root and source of all true piety. To this end he made use, as he had so often done before, of false prophets, or heretical teachers. So early as the middle of the eleventh century Berengarius of Tours had been misled, by a vain arrogance, into denying the real change of the elements of bread and wine, in the most holy sacrament of the altar. He twice disregarded the summons to appear before the ecclesiastical tribunal, but at last renounced his errors at Rome before Pope Gregory VII., and died, it is said, repentant and in the faith of the Church. In the first half of the next century many

more fanatical deceivers arose, who promulgated the most impious doctrines, and who, whilst declaiming against the riches of the Church, themselves lived in the most shameless debauchery. Such were, in the south of France, Peter of Bruis; in the north, Eon or Eude de Stella; and Tanchelm in Flanders. But the ravings of these fanatics made but little impression. Other sects however appeared, which spread far more widely and threatened much more danger to the Church. Such were the Waldenses and Albigenses, and later the Wickliffites and Hussites. The tenets of all were of a most mischievous character; they not only opposed the dogmatic teaching of the Church, but sought to undermine all authority, both secular and ecclesiastical.

The Waldenses were founded by one Peter Waldus, a rich merchant of Lyons, who about the year 1160 fell into the error that entire poverty was necessary for salvation. Thereupon renouncing his possessions, he gave his money to the beggars and called on every one to do the like. When his disciples were forbidden to preach, they applied to their own case the words of Holy Scripture, that "it is better to obey God than man," and renounced their obedience to the Church. They fell into further error after their connection with the Cathari, and later with the Hussites and Protestants. The sect spread considerably in the south of France and the north of Italy, where they still reckon a few adherents.

At the same time the far more serious heresy of the Albigenses was spreading far and wide. It took its name from the city of Albi in France, and there and in the country about it numbered many followers. Here certain heretics had congregated who had been condemned by the Church, but who called themselves "Cathari," or "the pure," although they held the impious heresy of the Manicheans and taught a most corrupt system of morals. Their efforts were directed to the simultaneous overthrow of Church and State. They misled many, and St. Bernard bewails bitterly the destruction they had wrought. "The churches," he says,

"are empty, the people without priests, the sacraments are contemned; thus the people die without the Church's aid, without repentance or conversion." As they paid no heed to the admonitions and warnings of the Church, but went so far as to murder the Papal legate, Peter of Castelnau, Innocent III. caused a crusade to be preached against them, saying, "These heretics are worse than the Saracens;" and it was only after a twenty years' struggle that they were reduced to submission. That the evil of heresy might not only be outwardly conquered, but uprooted also from the hearts of men, God raised up, as we have seen, the two great orders of St. Dominic and St. Francis. These, by word and example, victoriously opposed the false teaching, and led back numbers of its victims into the bosom of the Church. In order effectually to suppress the lurking spirit of rebellion, a wise and necessary measure was further taken by the Pope, the establishment, namely, of the Inquisition, a tribunal whose office it was to watch over purity of doctrine. Its rule of action was as follows:—Once or twice every year, the bishop was to visit such places in his diocese as were infected by heresy, and in each parish was to appoint trustworthy men, bound by oath to search out heresy and report to him concerning it. All evidence was to be carefully examined into, and the answer and defence of the accused heard, and according to the result judgment was to be given. The most severe sentence that could be pronounced was the delivering over of the criminal to the secular arm, which was however, at the same time requested to spare his life. The Church in this matter showed herself a true mother, watching anxiously over the welfare of her children, and not seeing them with indifference robbed of their most precious treasure, the true faith.

Animated by the same spirit of rebellion against the authority which God had established, Wickliffe, a professor at the University of Oxford, came forward in England towards the end of the fourteenth century. Among many other errors, he taught that if a pope, bishop, or priest

sinned, he lost his power; and that therefore, all consecrations or baptisms performed while in mortal sin were invalid; that kings and princes were bound, if they fell into grievous sin, to renounce their thrones; that temporal rulers were entitled to seize the possessions of the Church at their pleasure if those who held them were leading sinful lives; that all things happened of absolute necessity; that God was bound to obey the devil, &c. Doctrines of this kind could not fail when spread, to do untold mischief; and itinerant preachers were now employed in scattering them broadcast among the people. A bloody rising ensued; churches were desecrated, crucifixes and holy images destroyed, priests and monks murdered. The Archbishop Simon of Canterbury, and the Prior of the Knights of St. John, fell under the hands of the sectaries, and even the King himself was in danger from them. The heresy was put down in England by the use of stringent measures, but unhappily, not before it had been transplanted into Bohemia, where it produced yet more widespread evils.

Some young Bohemian nobles who had studied at Oxford, the most conspicuous of whom were Nicholas Faulfisch and Jerome of Prague, brought back the errors of Wickliffe to their own country, and zealously spread them abroad. "Whoever does not study Wickliffe's books," the latter was used to say, "he only knows the rind of knowledge, but the kernel and root are unknown to him." John Huss, a professor at the University of Prague, became the leader of the movement and the zealous promulgator of Wickliffe's heresy. The condemnation of Wickliffe, which the Church had pronounced, he declared to be false and unjust, and was bold enough to defend some of his doctrines in a public discussion. He translated a pernicious work of Wickliffe's into Bohemian, and spoke of him openly from the pulpit as a man with whom, after death, he would himself wish to be. He used his influence, as rector of the university, to spread the Wickliffite principles in that great seat of learning—principles subversive of all order, ecclesiastical

and civil. Thus he upheld, that a man in a state of mortal sin, lost all he had of spiritual or civil power; that obedience to the rulers of the Church was a human invention; that Peter himself had not been the head of the Church; that God had from all eternity destined one part of the human race, without regard to their merits, to eternal happiness, and the other, without regard to their merits, to eternal damnation; that the Church consisted only of those predestined to happiness; and that since it was impossible, without divine revelation to know whether a pope was or was not predestined to be saved, so it was also impossible to know whether he belonged to the true Church or the synagogue of Satan, with more of the same kind. The University of Paris, to whose opinion the teaching of Huss was submitted, pronounced it to be a "fatal and scandalous error, which would be followed by rebellion, disobedience, and the curse of Cham." The manner in which the Hussites would receive the interference of the Church authorities with their teaching is not hard to imagine.

When Huss was summoned for examination before the Archbishop of Prague, his party openly mocked and insulted that prelate by lampoons and offensive songs. He was inhibited from preaching, but to this he paid no regard, maintaining that, for the discharge of this function, a priest needed no jurisdiction from either pope or bishop. The greater excommunication was now pronounced against him, and the place where he dwelt laid under an interdict. He then appealed to Christ, saying that he recognised no earthly judge. He was banished from Prague by King Wenceslaus, but withdrew to the protection of some of the nobles who were friendly to him, and employed himself in the production of pernicious writings. He constantly preached to great crowds in the open fields, and delighted the people with his coarse delineations of the Pope, cardinals, and clergy. At the same time his errors were being diffused by Jerome of Prague throughout Poland, and in Moravia by others of his followers. A general council had meanwhile been assembled at Constance, and Huss was forced to appear before it at the instance of the Emperor Sigismund. The fathers of the council treated him with great mildness and forbearance. On being convicted by his own writings of heresy, he was called on to retract. Time was given him for reflection, and it was represented

to him that other great men also had erred and had repented. In vain, however! His indomitable obstinacy frustrated every endeavour. Although excommunicated, he still continued to say mass, to preach to the people, and to revile the Pope. The council was at last compelled to solemnly declare him an obstinate heretic, and he was degraded with the usual ceremonies from the priesthood. Heresy was then a civil crime by the laws of the State, and punishable with death. The fathers of the council however, petitioned the Emperor Sigismund to spare his life, but to hinder him from doing further harm by perpetual imprisonment. The Emperor, however, regarded Huss as obnoxious to the State, and did not accede to their request. He was handed over to the governor of Constance, and suffered death in the manner decreed by law for obstinate heretics, being burnt alive in the year 1415. He had, whilst in Prague, openly declared himself willing to submit to this punishment should the council convict him of heresy.¹ In the following year his friend, Jerome of Prague, shared the same fate.

When the news of the death of Huss reached Bohemia, the rage of his followers knew no bounds. They raised an insurrection in Prague, spoiled the houses of the Catholics, and illtreated and murdered priests and monks. The archbishop himself narrowly escaped them. In the country faithful priests were driven away, and their place filled by Hussites. The standard of rebellion was raised high against the Church, and all legitimate ecclesiastical authority set at defiance. At the Landtag in Prague, in 1415, a violently expressed document was drawn up by the Hussite nobles and sent to the council at Constance, signed by 452 lords and barons. An agreement was entered into to uphold liberty of

¹ It is unjust to look upon the execution of Huss as a violation of the safe-conduct granted him by the Emperor Sigismund. This safe-conduct was given, as its tenor clearly shows, to secure him from injustice, and not from the punishment the law would award should he be found guilty. On his journey to Constance, Huss would have been exposed to the enmity of the Germans, for he was the soul of the national party in Bohemia, by whom the Germans had been forced to emigrate in great numbers, and who had slain many of them. The Emperor's safe-conduct, or passport, was thus simply meant to protect him from possible wrong or injury at their hands. It could never have occurred either to the Emperor, the council, nor to Huss's own party, that such a document was to be a protection to him against the consequences of subsequent conviction, delivery to the secular arm, or the execution of his sentence. Even in the very bitter and violent letter addressed by the Hussite nobles to the council, no mention whatever is made of any breach of the safe-conduct. We cannot doubt but had there been any ground whatever for such a complaint, it would have been eagerly seized on by the angry followers of Huss. But it was only at a later period, when party spirit had risen into blind hatred, and any weapon of offence was welcome, that this invention was brought forward.

doctrine, to obey the Church only when in accordance with the Scriptures, and to follow in all things the decisions of the University of Prague. The movement had begun with rebellion against the Church, but in a few years revolt against the throne followed. Ziska, the leader of the rebellious Hussites, summoned a general assembly of the deputies of Bohemia, and entered Prague like a prince at their head. They forswore their allegiance to the King, and marched in open rebellion through the country, destroying the monasteries, spreading terror on all sides, and shrinking from no cruelty or excess. Wherever Ziska came, the monks especially were sufferers; many he killed with his own hands, striking them on their tonsured crowns with his club. Bohemia was soon in the hands of the rebels. Crusades were in vain sent against them to the aid of the Emperor Sigismund. Under Procopius, who succeeded Ziska, they invaded Austria, Hungary, and Germany, wasting the country and spreading panic wherever they approached. At last, after much negotiation, the Synod of Basle succeeded in reconciling the more moderate party among the Hussites to the Church, and later, in 1436, the rest followed their example; only a small remnant persisted secretly in their schism, and these since have received the name of the Bohemian or Moravian brothers.

“Thus peace was restored to the Church, and men, mighty in word and power, travelled everywhere, preaching penance to princes and people. Such were St. John Capistran, who died in 1456, and St. Vincent Ferrer, who died in 1419.”

As often as the Church is in extraordinary peril, so often does she receive extraordinary help from God. Thus we find it at this time, when much harm had been done by heresies, and also by a widespread relaxation of morals, which had crept in both amongst the clergy and people. It was now that God raised up powerful preachers of penance, who travelled through city and country, awaking thousands out of their deadly sleep. Some of these we will here mention. St. Vincent Ferrer travelled not only through almost every province of Spain, his native country, but also through France, Italy, England, Ireland, and Scotland. Whenever he came to a city, bishops, princes, and nobles, came forth with the people to meet him. Pope Martin V. and the kings of France and Spain went forth to receive him when he came to preach where they were. His hearers often numbered as many as 80,000 at one time. He preached with such super-

human power and eloquence that the most hardened sinners were terrified, and openly confessed their sins. In Spain alone, he converted 25,000 Jews and 8000 Mahometans. These conversions were due, not to his preaching only, but to the surpassing holiness of his life, and to the wonderful power of working miracles which God had granted to him. Like the apostles he possessed the gift of tongues, and when preaching in his own language was understood by men of all nations.

A like power in the conversion of sinners was possessed by St. John Capistran, a Franciscan, who preached mostly in Eastern Europe. He had been made a prisoner in battle, and on being ransomed entered the order of St. Francis. He travelled through the towns and villages of Italy, eloquently preaching penance. The impression made by his words and bearing, and the change wrought in men's lives by his preaching, soon caused his fame to spread beyond the confines of Italy. He was sent by the Apostolic See into Germany, at the request of the Emperor Frederic III. Here he was received as a messenger from God. His appearance, his words, and the wonderful cures which he wrought on the sick, gained him such veneration among the people that it was thought the greatest happiness even to touch his habit. Though he preached in Latin, and his words reached the people only through an interpreter, all heard him with sighs and tears. Converting sinners and healing the sick he traversed Austria, Moravia, and Bohemia, where he received the abjurations of 11,000 Hussites. He then returned to Germany, and whilst there was invited by King Casimir, at the desire of his people, into Poland. Everywhere his preaching roused men to penance and amendment, to the renunciation of usury, injustice, and other crimes. Numbers resolved upon consecrating their lives entirely to God. The last scene of his labours was in Hungary. Here it was that his confidence restored the failing courage of the whole Christian army. Cross in hand, he led them fearlessly against the Turkish host, and gained a splendid victory.

Trained in the same school as St. John Capistran, St. Bernardine of Sienna deserves also special mention as a preacher of penance. This great saint had the name of Jesus constantly on his lips, and kindled in many hearts that love for it which burned in his own. God's Word seemed in his mouth like a two-edged sword, which pierced men's hearts with the wound of contrition, and in so piercing healed them. He preached with burning zeal in nearly all the cities of Italy.

His footsteps were followed shortly after his death by another Franciscan, the blessed Bernardine of Feltre (died 1494). He laboured for thirty years in Northern and Central Italy. He founded pious associations in the cities for suppressing usury, by lending money without interest to those in need. He everywhere caused bad books and objects tending to immorality and superstition, to be collected and burned, under the name of the "devil's heap." He was able to reconcile contending parties by singing aloud in the streets, "*Pars mea Deus in æternum—My part is with God for ever.*"

At the same time Theodoric of Münster was working with apostolic power in the Netherlands. He journeyed from place to place with untiring zeal, and like St. John Capistran, had a wonderful power of terrifying and converting sinners. He died at the age of eighty, in the year 1515. On the day of his death he ascended the pulpit, and preached a sermon full of power and unction upon his own approaching departure for eternity. On the same day he was found by the brethren in his cell, dead, but kneeling, and with his hands folded.

Much was at this time also done for the salvation of souls, by the congregation which had been founded by Gerherd Groote (died 1384), at Deventer, in Holland. It had quickly become famous, and spread widely throughout Westphalia, Saxony, and as far as Southern Germany. It produced many holy men, distinguished for piety and good works, amongst them the venerated Thomas à Kempis, who died in 1471.

Johannes Tauler preached in Cologne and Strasburg about the middle of the fourteenth century, and such was the power of his sermons that his contemporaries declare the effect they produced to have been indescribable. He died 1361.

Lamentable as was the corruption of religious discipline which had arisen in many places, it was far from being as general as it has been represented. In the monasteries there were yet many men zealous and faithful to their vocation. To this even Luther bears witness when he says, "I have seen many Popish monks, who with much zeal did great and hard works, in order that they might become just and obtain salvation" (Walch., viii. 2458). There were holy religious also who set themselves with all their might to oppose the great defection from the Church, for which cause it was that they were pursued by Luther with such unremitting abuse. At this very period we meet too, with the most honourable endeavours to revive the religious rule in all its strictness. It was about now that the Benedictine congregation flourished, which was called the "Congregation of St. Justina." The cradle of this foundation was the old and famous monastery of St. Justina in Padua, of which a contemporary says, "As the church of this monastery is filled with the relics of the saints, so is the monastery itself with learned and pious monks." Ludovico Barbo the superior, here laid the foundation of that holy congregation which brought back many houses, not only of Benedictines, but also of other orders, to stricter observance. A like work was performed in Germany by the Bursfeld Congregation, which, in the year 1502, embraced as many as ninety abbeys, and whose earnest endeavour it was to restore the Benedictine rule as drawn up by its holy founder.

We meet with similar efforts among the orders of religious women. St. Colette, of the Poor Clares, founded a stricter branch of this order, which was favourably received in Savoy, France, and Burgundy. She died in 1447.

Another most glorious proof that the spirit of the severest self-abnegation yet lived within the Church is given us by

the founder of the Order of Minims, St. Francis of Paula, who died in 1507. Notwithstanding its extreme severity his order spread widely.

Neither were heroic virtue and Christian perfection, by any means confined to the solitude of the cloister. Other states of life could show also the brightest examples of sanctity of life. St. Laurentius Justinian (died 1455) adorned the patriarchal see of Venice. He was gifted by God with the most extraordinary graces, and animated with the greatest devotion to his flock. St. Antoninus, Archbishop of Florence (died 1459), united the greatest austerity of life with the most admirable pastoral zeal. A lady of the highest rank, St. Frances of Rome, was the edification of all by her profound humility and self-sacrificing charity. In Switzerland, Blessed Nicholas of Flüe (died 1487) led a life so heavenly, and so almost entirely emancipated from all human needs, that man's science entirely fails to explain its possibility. Poland at the same time was rejoicing in the possession of two of her greatest glories, St. John Cantius (died 1473) and the royal St. Casimir (died 1483), equally celebrated for his angelic purity and wonderful mortification.

"But the fire was still smouldering beneath the ashes. A reckless spirit of innovation had been awakened by the sectaries, and many circumstances unhappily combined to nourish it."

A most destructive influence on Christian faith and morals was exercised by the "Humanists," as they were called. By means of the Greek scholars, who fled to Italy after the capture of Constantinople by the Turks, a new enthusiasm for the study of the Pagan classics was awakened in Western Europe. This taste, laudable in itself, degenerated. In their zeal for the works of antiquity, men were not content with admiring their style, but themselves adopted also the unchristian and immoral principles contained in them. Indeed the partisans of classical study carried their fanaticism so far that they made as though all wisdom and excellence was to be sought for only among the ancient heathen. The ancient

Christian learning, on the contrary, they undervalued and despised. A strife of course, soon ensued between the clergy in behalf of ecclesiastical learning, and the elated champions of Pagan progress. The growing distaste for everything connected with the Church was fostered by party pamphlets, which were rapidly diffused in consequence of the newly-invented art of printing. Another hurtful influence was the struggle after riches, which the prosperity of the cities and the multiplication of sources of gain had gradually made general. The discovery, on the one hand, of a sea-passage to the East Indies, and, on the other, that of a new and rich western continent, though bringing many blessings, had the effect also of rousing in men so ardent a love of adventure as caused them to fix their whole minds and souls only on earthly things.

The respect for that supreme ecclesiastical authority, which was alone calculated to stem the rising evils, had, from various unhappy causes, of late been much weakened. From the year 1309 the Popes—because Rome was torn with parties—had fixed their residence at Avignon, now a French town, but which then belonged to the states of the Church. In this manner they both greatly lost consideration, and fell under the influence of the kings of France, who had but little concern except for their own interests. Meantime the power was wanting in Italy which might have held in check the hatred of the contending factions. In Germany the Emperor, the half-timid, half-arrogant Louis of Bavaria, was continually at feud with Pope John XXII. and his successors, from 1216 to 1334. At last, in the year 1377, Gregory XI., to the joy of Christendom, returned to Rome; but after his death events took a more deplorable turn than ever. An Italian, Urban VI., was elected in his place; but the French cardinals, who were numerous, upon this set up an Antipope, Clement VII., who fixed his abode at Avignon. The decision of the Council of Pisa, in 1409, increased the difficulties of the Church. It declared both the contending Popes—Benedict XIII., who had succeeded Clement, and

Gregory XII., who had succeeded Urban—to be deposed ; and elected Alexander V., who thus succeeded to Gregory XI. Each of these three however, found supporters, and thus there were three men at once, each claiming to be the, rightful Pope, and scattering excommunications on all sides. All Christendom agreed in maintaining that the Church was to be ruled by one Pope, its supreme head ; but who this Pope was it could not decide. It is plain, however, that the Church in no way thus lost her essential character of unity, any more than she does when the chair of Peter is made vacant by the death of a Pope, or as a kingdom does not become the less a monarchy though some time should elapse before an heir to the throne is agreed upon. As far as the faithful were concerned, they could, with clear conscience, abide by the decision of their bishops, inasmuch as the dispute affected nothing necessary to salvation. It did indeed so happen that each of the three disputants reckoned among his partisans, men who have since been honoured by the Church as saints. This great schism in the Western Church was at last ended by the Council of Constance, which, in the general interests of Christendom, set aside the three doubtful Popes, electing in their place Martin V. (A.D. 1417). But the Church's wounds were yet far from being healed. The strife, which had lasted forty years, could not but have tended to lower the pontifical dignity in the eyes of many. Ecclesiastical censures, from being so constantly uttered, had lost their ancient terrors. In order to support the different popes and their courts, the lands of their adherents had been oppressively taxed. Many abuses had become common in the bestowal of church benefices ; all was but so much fuel laid up for the approaching conflagration. And, lastly, at the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries, some of the occupants of the chair of Peter were men whose lives were little honour to their holy office. All these causes considered, it is very evident that things were fast ripening for some great and momentous change.

"An occasion only was wanting to fan the smouldering fire into a conflagration. And such an occasion arose in Germany at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The deplorable evil spread like a pestilence, thousands upon thousands fell away from the Catholic Church. Then followed bloody wars, rebellions, and a general corruption of morals; the most splendid foundations of former times were destroyed, and the way prepared for boundless misery both here and hereafter. But the protection of the Most High was yet unmistakably present with that Church which He had Himself founded immovably upon a rock."

The truth of this, the history, which follows will most clearly show.

REVIEW OF THE PERIOD FROM THE CONVERSION OF CONSTANTINE TO THE SCHISM OF THE SIX- TEENTH CENTURY.

Having reached a fresh period in the history of our holy Church, it is again advisable to cast a rapid glance over the space we have traversed. If the history of the Church during the first period of her existence—that namely, of persecution—bears visible witness that she came from God; so too, her history during the second period—that of the Middle Ages—does but furnish fresh proofs of her divine origin.

To the Church has been given the great mission of regenerating mankind, of freeing them from the slavery of Satan and of sin, of bringing them forth anew to life in God, and of making them happy for time and eternity; and when we see how faithfully during the Middle Ages she fulfilled her high trust, how true a transformation of mankind was effected through her ministry, and what immeasurable blessings she spread around, we are compelled to admit that a divine power truly resides within her, and that that tree can only be from heaven which has borne such rich and heavenly fruit. True to her vocation, the Church during this period never ceased from striving to shed farther and farther abroad the light of faith. When Roman Paganism was deprived by Constantine of the temporal power which had hitherto made it formidable, the remaining heathen nations of the empire were quickly gained to the faith, and the Church then directed her efforts with the most astonishing results to the conversion of those outside its pale. Again, during the great social upheaving, when so many barbarous hordes overran the Roman Empire, she cast her nets into the deep. Through her heavenly teaching and the indwelling

power of the Holy Spirit she tamed those fierce and savage tribes and united them to her flock.

But even so she was not content. Thirsting for the salvation of souls, she sought out the darkened dwellers in the most distant lands, and by the heroic devotion of her apostles, who gladly offered their lives in her cause, succeeded in converting all Europe to the true faith, and in planting the Cross of Christ in Africa and even the farthest limits of Asia. Wherever the Holy Ghost had taken possession of men's hearts, the whole face of the earth became transformed. Idolatry disappeared, with its abominations, cruelties, and human sacrifices,¹ and men knelt everywhere before the altars of the Most High. The huge amphitheatres which the Romans had built in all the towns of any importance, where thousands of human beings were used to bleed and die as a spectacle for their fellow-men, were deserted, and left to fall into ruins. The multitudes of slaves, without rights, less valued than cattle, driven to market for sale, and often put to death without cause, now obtained freedom, and saw themselves loved and treated as brethren by their fellow-men. That disgrace of Paganism—the overwhelming degradation of women—ceased also, and the Christian woman stood in all the honour with which Christianity invests human nature. The marriage tie was hallowed by a sacrament. The abominable license, the satiety and the weariness of life, the general corruption and dissolution of human society which St. Paul describes in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, were now over, and the Christian era had begun. Through God's grace and the glad message of the Gospel, joy and peace entered men's hearts, and Christian morality and Christian virtue were nurtured both in the family and in the State. No more glorious monument could be devised than that which the Church has thus raised to herself; and all should thank God on their knees for the salvation which He has sent the world by her instrumentality.

It would be a folly to refuse to recognise the Church's influence, because deeds of gross violence and oppression were often committed during the Middle Ages. That this was so none can deny. But the blame rests with those individuals who, but too often, unfortunately, would not hear the voice of the Church. The Church herself never sought to lead men to aught else than to piety and virtue, to happiness here and hereafter. And the truly marvellous manner in which she succeeded in so doing, history shows us in a thousand different ways. Thus—to appeal only to well-known and evident facts—the strongest of all proofs of the

¹ Even amongst the Germans, idolatry was not free from this stain. See Greith, "*Gesch. der altirischen Kirche*," p. 340.

fruitful power of our holy Church, is that entire unity of faith by which she so intimately bound together all the nations of the West, and in so doing conferred on them the greatest of blessings. And to see in what manner that faith influenced men's hearts and moved them to great deeds, we have but to recall the wonderful zeal with which the most difficult sacrifices were made for God's sake; the self-denial with which contrite sinners performed the hardest penances; and the inspired devotion which so often sent huge armies to the East, to encounter for Christ's sake, hard toil, captivity, and death. Again, the numberless churches, monasteries, and schools built everywhere during those times are all witnesses to that efficacious power with which the Catholic Church, like a loving mother, had gathered about her the rude and uncivilised dwellers of the swamps and forests, and taught and cared for them, transforming them into good citizens of earth and heirs of heaven. Yet further, there are the many religious orders which spread themselves so quickly and worked everywhere with such blessed results; the great popes and bishops who fought and suffered for the faith; doctors and saints famous for their learning and virtue; and the multitudes of holy men and women of every degree with whose bright examples these ages furnish us. Again, in proof of the Church's salutary influence, we have the numerous charitable institutions then founded—institutions devised by Christian love and endowed purely for the relief of human misery of every kind. The heathen had none such, because they knew nothing of Christian love. Such foundations, in so far as they are inspired by the true spirit of Christian charity, could and can only come forth from the bosom of the Church and flourish under her care. Such institutions as these witness most nobly to the deep piety of those ages, and so also do the numberless gifts made to God—the stately cathedrals built in His honour, the interior richness of the churches, and the splendour with which the divine offices were celebrated. How many of such pious foundations and bequests have not, in after times, been sacrilegiously plundered and maliciously destroyed! If we, at the present day, possess true religion and true culture, let us never forget that it is to the Church mankind owes these great blessings, and that it is the Church who is their divinely appointed guardian and preserver. As Moses formerly adjured the children of Israel not to forget the Lord in the promised land which they were about to enter, else the curse would surely overtake them; so does the Church warn us now, not to vainly boast ourselves, but to be ever thankful to God for His benefits, and to cling steadfastly with our whole hearts to that holy religion by means of which He led our forefathers from the night of barbarism into the light of Christian civilisation.

FROM THE SCHISM OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY
TO OUR OWN TIMES.

SECTION XLIII.

LUTHER'S REVOLT FROM THE CHURCH—HIS FALSE TEACHING—CAUSES
OF ITS RAPID SPREAD—ZWINGLIUS—CALVIN—THE ANABAPTISTS—
DIFFUSION OF HERESY IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES, WITH THE MEANS
USED FOR ITS EXTENSION.

“Martin Luther, a professor at Wittenberg, a man of hasty disposition, first began by protesting against certain abuses which were practised by indiscreet persons with regard to indulgences (1517). He soon after however, set himself up on his own authority as a reformer or amender of the Church, and placed himself in opposition to his spiritual superiors, especially to the Pope, whose supreme authority he denounced as an arrogance and tyranny, to which he was himself commissioned to put an end.”

IN the new period which we have now reached, we find the Church exposed to violent hostilities, and also from time to time to the severest persecution, but yet ever verifying the promise of her Divine Founder, that “the gates of hell shall not prevail against her.” Through the attacks of the Spirit of Lies, her marks of truth are but made to appear more evidently, for she holds fast immovably to the faith committed to her, and surrenders no particle of her divine trust. The new doctrines, on the contrary, bear unmistakably the stamp of falsehood; Christ is not their Author; their teachers do not profess the unanimous faith of the Church; they reject at one time as error what at another they affirm as truth; and their opinions, after passing through numberless different shades, finally resolve themselves into absolute unbelief. The disseminators of heresy did great injury to the Church by seducing her children from their allegiance, and so preparing the way for the loss of innumerable souls; but even so she became purged from elements of evil, and the damage which she suffered has been made up to her by the conversions which have taken place in other parts of the world; the labours of even one apostle raised up by God having amply compensated her for what she had been deprived of by the so-called Reformation. And in all the persecutions which during this period have raged against her, and specially against her head, God has been constantly beside her and given her many glorious victories.

Martin Luther was the man, who, at the beginning of the period of which we are speaking, drew on this deplorable revolt against the Church. He was born at Eisleben, in the year 1483, and entered the Augustinian Order in 1505. He was ordained priest in 1507; later on he obtained his degree of doctor, and taught theology in the newly-founded University of Wittenberg. In temper he was ardent and hasty; naturally stubborn, he held tenaciously to pre-conceived opinions, and endured contradiction with difficulty. Whilst he was still living at his convent a friend standing at his side was struck down by lightning. This so impressed him that he gave himself up seriously to penance and pious exercises; but his self-love, which he sought to gratify by thus fostering within himself a consciousness of his own merit, was a source to him of disquiet and discontent, and already planted in his soul the germ of those unhappy errors which afterwards gained for him so lamentable a renown. The first step which brought his false opinions to light, was taken by Luther on the eve of All Saints, A.D. 1517, when, ostensibly to attack the abuses practised in connection with indulgences, he affixed to the door of the Schloss Kirche of Wittenberg a paper containing fifty-nine controversial theses. It was just at this time that the solemn publication of the indulgence granted by Pope Leo X. had taken place in Wittenberg, by the terms of which the alms prescribed for the obtaining of the indulgence were to be applied in aid of the building the Cathedral of St. Peter, which was then rising in its colossal majesty over the tomb of the Prince of the Apostles.¹ It cannot be denied that the most deplorable abuses often occurred in the collection of such alms. Many councils, both general and provincial, had already published salutary rules for the prevention of such; but these unhappily were often not observed. Luther, though not actually denying the power of granting indulgences, nevertheless held them in slight esteem, and irregularities of this kind afforded him

¹ See further, vol. iv. p. 579 or 581.

a favourable opportunity for attacking them, and holding them up successfully to contempt. And this he did in his controversial theses, in which were set forth besides, many other heretical and offensive propositions. Nor did he stop here. Encouraged by the applause of numbers, who perceived in him only a zealous enemy of abuses, he put forth the following year in a public disputation, propositions containing the entire essence of all his heretical teaching. One, for instance, ran thus:—"Men's works, let them be as good as they may, are nevertheless, according to a not unfounded opinion, nothing else than mortal sins." And again: "Free will, as it exists since the Fall, is nothing but a mere name, and if followed, leads to mortal sin." And again: "Faith justifies without works." Soon after he ventured to publish a work, addressed to "The Imperial Majesty and Christian nobility touching the reformation of Christendom," in which he virtually threw off his allegiance to the Church. To this followed two others, one "On the Mass," and the other "On the Babylonish Captivity," in which he repudiated the whole of the Church's doctrine as it had been ever taught and received throughout the world concerning the Christian means of grace. Leo X. meanwhile had tried all friendly means to recall Luther to a better mind. He addressed him first through the general of the Augustinian Order; next he sent him a warning through Cajetan, the Papal legate; and, lastly, despatched to him Miltiz, his chamberlain. Luther, however, would listen to no remonstrance. He had indeed, whilst his party was still weak, in order to deprecate summary measures on the part of the Pope, written a letter to Leo, expressed in the most humble terms, in which he protested that it was an abuse only which he had been endeavouring to abolish. "Most Holy Father," he then says, "I throw myself at your feet, with all that I have and am. Quicken me, kill me, reprove me, confirm me, or reject me, according to your pleasure. In your voice I recognise the voice of Christ, who presides in you, and speaks through you. If I have deserved death, I do not refuse to die." When,

however, in 1520, a Papal bull was published, wherein forty-one of Luther's propositions were condemned as heretical, and he himself threatened with excommunication if he did not recant within sixty days, his anger knew no bounds. He immediately published his work "*Against the Bull of Antichrist*," which surpassed in insolence of language anything which had hitherto appeared in a Christian country. It was in the December of the same year, that surrounded by a band of unruly students, he publicly burnt the Papal bull, together with the book of Canon Law, at the gates of Wittenberg, presumptuously saying as he did so, "Because thou hast troubled the holy one of the Lord (meaning himself), so may eternal fire trouble and consume thee!" Luther remained firm to the last in his hatred of the Papacy. The words which he uttered just before his death betoken the virulent animosity with which he regarded it. "*Pestis eram vivus, moriens ero mors tua, Papa—I was thy pest, O Pope, while I lived, and dying, I will be thy death!*"

The fire kindled by Luther became more and more threatening, and in 1521 the German Emperor, Charles V., found himself obliged to summon the author of the disturbance to appear and answer for himself before the Diet of Worms. Luther, who knew himself to be favoured by the powerful Elector Frederick of Saxony, and by a strong party among the German nobles, especially the knights, presented himself with great boldness, and challenged those who called on him to retract, to first prove him to be wrong out of the Scriptures. Such a demand was as uncatholic as it was foolish; for the claim to take Scripture only as the rule of faith, rejecting apostolical tradition, the decisions of councils, and the teaching of the fathers, is in itself an heretical one, and, as such, could in no way receive acknowledgment on the part of Catholics. And even had his antagonists opposed to Luther's teaching the words of Scripture, their doing so would have been vain, insomuch as he held that each man was free to place his own private interpretation on the sacred text. He had moreover, already, when hard pushed at the

disputation of Leipsic by arguments from Scripture, had the unparalleled boldness to reject parts of the inspired writings as apocryphal, and had blasphemously called St. James' Epistle "an epistle of straw." Owing to his obstinacy in refusing to retract at the Diet of Worms, Luther was placed under the ban of the empire, a safe-conduct, lasting twenty-one days, being given him for his journey home. The Elector Frederick however, did not forsake his protégé. He caused him to be secretly conducted to the Castle of Wartburg near Eisenach, where he remained for about a year, and occupied himself in making a translation of the Bible. His followers, however, spread a report that his safe-conduct had been violated, and that he had been carried off by force. Before following any further the history of this heresy, we will examine more closely into its nature.

"Luther's errors led him to reject many doctrines which the Church had received from Christ and His apostles. He set aside the holy sacrifice of the mass, and desired to abolish fasting, confession, prayers for the dead, and many other pious practices. He declared good works to be without value, and that faith alone was needed to justify and save man. He also threw open convents, permitted monks and nuns to marry, and adjudged to princes and lords the right of appropriating the goods of the monasteries and religious foundations, and disposing of them according to their pleasure. And finally, by marrying a nun, he broke the vow of chastity which he had himself solemnly taken as a priest and a monk."

Although Luther at the time of his first attack upon Tetzel may have had no intention of formally separating himself from the Church, with her teaching he had nevertheless been long at variance, though very likely without suspecting how far his first deviations would carry him. Spiritual pride was in him, as we have already mentioned, the source of all evil. He had desired to be justified in his own strength, and to this end had exhausted himself vainly in fasts, watchings, prayers, and mortifications. But since when assailed by temptations and by his own strong passions he had not been able in spite of all his efforts to hide from himself the sinfulness of his nature, he had fallen into sadness, desolation, distrust, and terror of God. He says, "When yet a cowed monk in my convent, so much was I the enemy of Christ, that if I saw His picture or His image as He hung upon the Cross, I feared and cast down my eyes, and would sooner have

seen the devil." This temper of mind, after first leading him almost to despair, ended at last by driving him to the opposite extreme. Many of his friends, pitying his sufferings, directed his attention to the necessity of faith in the mercy of God, who forgives us our sins through the merits and death of Christ. And it was in this consideration only, that Luther, who was often strongly tempted to suicide, could find some comfort. He clung with all the power of his soul to the words of Holy Scripture, "The just man lives by faith." But now soon, he rushed from his former despair to the other extreme, and persuaded himself that he could be saved through faith alone, without effort or co-operation on his own part. That this was so, his own words prove: "In such thoughts (ill-will and anger against God) I passed day and night, till by God's grace, I remarked how the words hung together, to wit, 'The justice of God is revealed in the Gospel,' as it is written, 'The just man lives by his faith.' Thence have I learned to know this same justice of God, in which the just man, through God's grace and gift, lives by faith alone. . . . I forthwith felt that I was entirely born anew, and that I had found a wide and unbarred door by which to enter into Paradise itself." According to this we see that Christian teaching had received at his hands a fundamental alteration in its most essential parts.

He taught that, in consequence of original sin, human nature had become essentially bad; that man's freedom for good was lost; and that he could work nothing but what was evil; that sin, indeed, was so deeply implanted in the nature of man that it remained in children after baptism; and that all the good works of the just partook of the nature of sin. Through the merits however, of Jesus Christ, who has made satisfaction for us and fulfilled the law, the sinfulness which yet remains in man is, according to him, covered over and hidden, provided he lays hold of the merits of Christ by faith, and believes firmly that he is justified through Jesus Christ. Man's salvation, he thus taught, depends entirely upon his possession of this firm confidence; for through it alone, the merits and righteousness of our Lord are applied to him, however much he may have already sinned or be still sinning. This was the doctrine through which Luther found for himself comfort and peace. This was the doctrine which he called his "Gospel;" for what more joyful tidings could there be than the news that man

was justified before God, and his salvation secured, not through penance and amendment, not through keeping the commandments and doing good works, but by a mere act of trust in Christ as his Saviour? And these joyful tidings, he maintained, had been for many centuries lost sight of, and all Christendom, wandering in darkness, had been vainly striving to work out its salvation through works of piety and self-mortification. According to this it clearly followed that all Christian teaching, all ecclesiastical ordinances and pious usages, however salutary they might be, and however incontestably handed down from Christ or the holy apostles, must be set aside in so far as they were at variance with the new gospel, or appeared superfluous when viewed in its light. No place could possibly be found any more for penance, fasting, pilgrimages, and the like; and no necessity could remain for confession of sins or the exercise of good works. For to what end would these serve if faith alone justified? and where would now be the use of penance and mortification? These, Luther indeed maintained, do but decrease the power of faith, dishonour Christ and the efficacy of His redeeming grace, and nourish pride and self-confidence.

A sort of confession, indeed, he still desired to see retained, on account of the consolation it afforded to the penitent; and this confession might be made, not necessarily to a priest, but merely to a fellow-layman. We thus at the present time find that the Protestants of many parts make an acknowledgment of their sinfulness according to a form given in Luther's "Little Catechism," in which none however, declares his own sins in particular. Confession, according to Luther, had not the character of a sacrament; and indeed, he did not allow to any sacrament, its essential character as understood by the Catholic Church. For since Luther did not acknowledge any inward holiness in man, neither could he acknowledge any power in the sacraments for producing such holiness. In his estimation the sacraments were only of value in so far as they awakened and strengthened man's faith in the divine promises. Only Baptism and the Lord's Supper however,

appeared to him fitted for this end, and he therefore discarded the other sacraments which Christ had instituted.

The Eucharist he ordered should be given to all under both kinds. He would willingly have denied the real presence of our Lord Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, "thereby," as he said, "to deal a blow to Popery;" but the words of Holy Scripture appearing to him too precise to admit of this, he set aside the doctrine of the transubstantiation of the elements, and taught instead that Christ's Body was eaten in, under, and with, the bread. Though the testimony of ecclesiastical writers proved beyond all possible doubt that the holy sacrifice of the mass was offered always from the very first throughout the whole Christian Church, Luther nevertheless unhesitatingly repudiated it as a Popish abomination, and stigmatised those bishops and priests who celebrated it as idolaters. He preached a universal priesthood. "Each that has been baptized," he says, "may boast himself that he is ordained bishop, priest, or pope;" and he thus cast aside the sacrament of orders, and with it the entire constitution given by Christ to His Church.

In the Church which Luther set up, all were equal, all had equal rights and equal power—none needed to obey, for none had the power to command. However, to obviate as far as might be, irregularity and disorder, congregations were to agree among themselves in electing some from among them, who would baptize, preach, and administer the Lord's Supper, but who in all concerns relating to the Church were to submit to the decisions of their temporal rulers.¹

Later, in 1530, at the Diet of Augsburg, Melancthon vainly endeavoured to restore the ecclesiastical constitution. "With what face," he wrote, "can we deprive the bishops of their authority? I see what kind of a Church we shall have after its government has fallen to pieces: I see that then a

¹ "Luther took every opportunity," says Wolfgang Menzel (*Gesch. der Deutschen*, 393), "of inculcating the principle that ecclesiastical cases were to be decided by secular rulers. The authority of the bishops passed entirely into the hands of princes."

tyranny will ensue far more unbearable than any there ever was before."

But the Protestant princes and statesmen were as little in favour of such a measure as Luther himself. "These men," Melancthon writes, "who have become accustomed to freedom, and who have once cast off the yoke of the bishops, will not willingly submit to its being again laid upon them. About doctrine and religion they inquire very little; liberty and government is all they care about."

With regard to holy matrimony, Luther not only stripped it of its sacramental character, but in a "Sermon on Married Life," published in 1526, laid down maxims directly opposed to the Christian moral law regarding the chastity proper to that state. After having, as he had done, trampled under foot the authority of the Church, and wantonly set aside those means of grace which Christ had ordained, we shall not wonder at his forbidding also the veneration and invocation of the saints, the honouring of their images and relics, and the practice of praying for the dead—all which had come down from apostolic times. Also it need hardly be said, that the celibacy of the clergy, monastic life, and religious vows, harmonised ill with his new gospel. These all were, he taught, tyrannical, contrary to nature, and in so far as men hoped to be saved through them, blasphemous. He held therefore, that the law of clerical celibacy should be abolished, monastic vows not annulled only, but made severely punishable, and all monasteries levelled with the ground. Priests living in prohibited relationships, monks and nuns to whom monastic discipline and restraints were burdensome, seized the opportunity which thus offered, to rid themselves of their bonds; whilst those to whom Christ's yoke was sweet, and who would have willingly remained in their convents, were forcibly driven out, and the Church lands and property seized on by the secular power.

Luther himself soon followed the course which he was accustomed to recommend to priests, monks, and nuns. In the year 1525, at the age of forty-two, in defiance of his

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priestly and monastic vows, he married a Cistercian nun named Catherine von Bora.¹

Since Luther often boasted himself that before his own time, nothing had been known or understood of the saving truths of Christianity, he must therefore have been fully aware that his gospel, as he called it, was a new one, and that it differed also from the teaching of the whole Catholic Church. And indeed he was not able to conceal from himself, how dangerous a thing it was to introduce novelties and to oppose the whole Church; and he was wont to exhort such innovators as desired to proceed further than he had done, to adhere to so much of the unanimous teaching of the Church as he himself had chosen to retain. "It is dangerous and fearful," he wrote in 1532, "to hear or believe anything contrary to the united witness—the belief and teaching of Christ's holy Church—which she has unanimously held from the beginning throughout all the world for more than 1500 years." Only five years before his death he wrote: "The Church's mouth is God's mouth; God cannot lie; so neither can the Church." In his more lucid moments also he appeared able to recognise that the true Church existed beneath the Papacy. Eleven years after his own attack upon the Church of Rome, he admits this in a letter on baptism addressed to two ministers. He there says: "I say that there is true Christianity under the Pope; yea, a very pattern of all Christianity, and many pious and great saints . . . and if those Papists be true Christians, then must they also be truly members of the Body of Christ; and if of His Body, must have the true spirit, gospel, faith, sacraments, pardoning and preaching offices, worship, baptism, and all that should pertain to Christianity." It is not surprising then, if his heart, as he himself bears witness, sometimes misgave him and upbraided him with the suggestion, "How if thou art thyself in error, and art leading so many with thee into error and eternal damnation?" But such warnings of a troubled conscience he strove to silence by representing to himself that they were diabolical illusions and temptations which he was bound to resist.

"It was Luther's boast that he drew his teaching only from the Bible; but, misled by false interpretations of the sacred text, he soon fell into the most palpable contradictions and errors. He held, that having no freewill, man could neither keep God's commandments nor avoid evil; that sin was not damning so long as a man possessed firm faith," &c.

¹ Even Luther's friends seem to have been surprised at this step. Erasmus writes scoffingly, "This undertaking of Luther's appears to many a tragedy, but he himself must hold it for a comedy, as everything ends with a marriage."

Luther was often asked with what right he had exalted himself over bishops, popes, councils, doctors, and fathers, and set himself up as a reformer. Had he received his commission from God he was bound to prove it by signs and wonders, as apostles and prophets had done before him. Luther tacitly admitted the justice of this demand; for he addressed a like one to certain other sectaries who taught differently from himself, when, in a letter to the magistrate of Mühlhausen, he formally commanded him to forbid the preaching of innovators unless they should prove their mission by miracles. And he even allowed that he should be forced to work miracles himself, should the Papists persist in their challenge. But to work miracles however, was less easy than to impose a false sense upon the words of Holy Scripture till what they seemed to say was the exact opposite to their real meaning. And in doing this, Luther was distinguished by a boldness and address, greater perhaps than any heretical teacher had ever possessed before him. He boasted too, as all preceding heretics had done, that his teaching was drawn solely from the Bible, which was the pure Word of God. And indeed, his unprecedented and most pernicious doctrines would have been too offensive to find acceptance had he not made use of the common artifice of heretics, who, as an ancient father says, "To hide the ill smell of their teaching seek to mix it with the perfume of God's Word."¹ And on the ground where he had taken up his stand, it was by no means easy to cut off his retreat. Let it be shown never so clearly that his teaching was purely arbitrary and in direct opposition to councils and fathers, he would reply that the words of councils and fathers were men's words, but that he held to the Word of God. If it was objected to him, that the question itself was one of the right understanding of the Divine Word, and that the sense he put upon it was repugnant to reason, he was ready to answer that it was the devil who misled the Romish priests into measuring the Word of God

¹ Vincentii Lirin, *Common.*, cap. 25.

by reason, but that reason was a beast whom the Christian was, on the contrary, bound to blind and strangle. If however the words in question were so clear, that he could not deny that his own doctrine did not agree with them, he would appeal from the text to Christ; and say that, having on his side the Lord and Master of Scripture, he did not need to inquire into every sentence of Scripture itself; or else he would go so far as to falsify the passages or even to repudiate the book containing it. Thus, for instance, in Rom. iii. 28, he allowed himself to interpolate the word "alone" into the text, in order to support his teaching that faith alone sufficed for justification.¹ When this was objected to him he replied, Should any Papist be wishing to get rid of that word "solo" (alone), tell him at once that Doctor Martin Luther will have it there, and that he says "a Papist is just the same thing as an ass." Such was the power assumed to himself by the man who had rejected the authority of the fathers, the councils, and the whole Church.

We cannot be surprised at Luther's proceeding yet further on the slippery path he had entered, laying down principles as blasphemous as they are unreasonable, and tending to the subversion of all moral and civil order. In his book "On the Captivity of the Human Will,"² he says:—"Man's will is like a horse: if God rides it, it goes and wills as God wills; if the devil, it goes as the devil wills." Again, "God does evil in us as well as good; and even as He justifies us without merit, so also He damns us without guilt." Teaching on the one hand, as he did, the bondage of man's will, he maintained, on the other, his freedom and immunity from all law. He explains as follows, the second chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians:—"If thy conscience says to thee, 'Thou hast sinned,' then answer, 'Yes!' But if it says, 'Therefore will God punish and condemn thee;' answer, 'No!' But the law tells thee this? Thou mayest say, 'The law is nothing to me.' And wherefore? 'Because I am free.'" He lays down the same doctrine in his book on the Babylonish captivity.³ "I say boldly,"

¹ For further instances of Luther's falsifications in his translation of the Scriptures, see Dollinger, "Reformation," vol. iii. pp. 139-173.

² *De servo arbitrio ad Erasmum*, 525.

De Captivitate Babylonica Ecclesie; Sacram. bapt.

he there writes, "that the Christian can be burthened with no law either by men or angels, except in so far as he himself wills it; for we are free from all." He deduces in the same book from the text, "He that believes, and is baptized, shall be saved," that sin cannot damn a Christian so long as he believes. "So thou seest," he says, "how rich the Christian or baptized man is, who, even if he desires to do so, cannot imperil his salvation through any sin, be it never so great, so long as he continues to have faith; for no sin can damn him save only the sin of unbelief."¹ We can thus see how, in a letter to Melancthon from the Wartburg, he was able to say, "Sin boldly, but believe yet more boldly," with more which is better left unwritten.²

"Notwithstanding the scandalous nature of its doctrines, the new teaching soon gained many adherents. The easy life, freed from burdensome duties which it allowed of, was a temptation to sensual-minded men; whilst the much-coveted permission to seize upon church lands, which Luther pretended to give, was a tempting bait to the avaricious nobles. Luther also had but few scruples as to the means he took to obtain support; he indeed went so far as to allow the Landgrave of Hesse to take a second wife in addition to his first, the latter being still living."

The entirely unauthorised nature of the new teaching, and the total want of any divine mission on the part of its founder, as well as the irrationality and impiety of many of its doctrines, prove conclusively that causes were at work to account for its spread very different from the one so commonly assigned, the efficacy, namely, of the pure Word of God preached by Luther. Such causes will be found in those tendencies of the age, which we have before spoken of;—in the ignorance, namely, of the people and of a great part of the clergy; in Luther's boldness and popular eloquence; and also in his restless zeal in the propagation of his doctrines, which formed a striking contrast to the careless indolence of many prelates and dignitaries of the Church. History shows us with cer-

¹ Since the book is written in Latin, we here give the text as it stands in two of the oldest Wittenberg editions:—"Ita vides, quam dives sit homo Christianus sive baptizatus, qui etiam volens non potest perdere salutem suam quantiscumque peccatis, nisi nolit credere. Nulla enim peccata eum possunt damnare, nisi sola incredulitas." And it was the writer of this passage that Frederick, the wise Elector of Saxony, took under his protection because he had not then been convicted of heresy!

² *Epist. ad Melancth.*, A.D. 1521.

tainty that in this rapid diffusion of heresy the most sordid interests and passions were brought into play, and it is to them that its extraordinary success must be in great measure ascribed. Most welcome to the sensual-minded among men would be the doctrines that were being so zealously spread abroad, both by sermons and writings; such as that of the sufficiency of faith for justification; the uselessness of good works; the liberty of the Christian, in virtue of which there was no need for him to obey the Church's ordinances, to fast, or to confess his sins. "Oh, that was a fine sermon," writes a contemporary, who had himself at first been enthusiastic for the new doctrine; "no more fasting, no more praying, no more confessions, no more alms and offerings . . . With this net you might indeed have beguiled and caught two Germanies instead of one." Calvin himself, of whom we shall have to speak later, openly allowed¹ that out of ten "evangelicals" there was hardly one to be found who had not adopted the new religion that he might give himself up the more freely to indulgence and sensuality. "What indeed," he says in another place, "have these sought, who have cast off the yoke of superstition, but that in so doing they might give themselves up the more entirely to all lechery?"² They blasphemously misuse the Gospel to cloak their own wickedness. Yea, I have even known those who were not afraid to defend their very adulteries out of the Gospel." From these early fruits of the new teaching we may estimate the nature of the causes which led to its rapid spread. The most abundant evidence is furnished by Protestant contemporaries, that the diffusion of the new gospel was everywhere attended by a most fearful corruption of morals.³ Luther himself saw with his own eyes the evil fruits of his teaching, which could be concealed neither from himself nor from others. His writings are full of complaints and lamentations over the growing confusion. "The world," he says, "by means of the

¹ Comment. in Ep. Pet., ii. 2.

² De Scandalis, pp. 118, 127.

³ S. Döllinger, *Die Reformation*.

new gospel has only become more corrupt and deceitful, more loose and wicked.¹ Men who before were possessed by but one devil are now possessed by seven." And again, "Crime, vice, and wantonness, have taken such deep root, and so got the upper hand, that no preacher now dares speak of them, or does so at the peril of his life and goods, or at the risk of being hunted away."²

But although the new teaching held out tempting allurements to many, the old faith was too firmly established in men's hearts to have been easily uprooted, had the people only known from the first what was the real nature of the movement. But in the early years of the struggle very few looked forward to an entire separation from the ancient Church. They regarded the present state of things as a provisional one, pending the final decision of a general council. No complaint was more frequently in Luther's mouth than that his good intentions were misconstrued, and that he himself was called a heretic; whilst in fact, so far from wishing to separate himself from the Church, he had solemnly appealed to the judgment of a general council upon his teaching. And at the beginning of the year 1520 he wrote to the newly-elected emperor, Charles V., that he wished to die a true and obedient son of the Catholic Church. The leaders of heresy carefully avoided giving any explanation to the people of the real state of the case. What they desired, was they said, to do away with superstition, and with men's additions to the pure Word of God. And the people were lured on to destruction by the charm of such expressions as "Gospel," and "pure and unadulterated Word of God," under which the poison of the new doctrines was hidden. Afterwards, when they discovered how greatly they had been deceived and misled, they had not resolution necessary to retrace their steps and re-enter the Catholic Church; great courage would indeed have been required to enable them to do this, as in

¹ Walch. Aug. xiii. 19.

² In a sermon written a few months before his death.

those lands which had become Protestant the people languished under a stern religious despotism.

Here we touch on another principal cause of the quick propagation of Protestantism; for it is an undeniable fact, that not only did the secular rulers hinder the suppression of the new doctrine, but that they also used their influence in favour of its further spread. As we have already seen, it was the powerful Elector, Frederick of Saxony, who, from the very first, took Luther under his protection; and without this protection the evil would have been crushed in the bud. The new teaching soon found other and powerful patrons among princes and nobles, who saw here a much desired opportunity of enlarging their domains by the secularisation of abbey lands, and of paying their debts and filling their treasuries by seizing on Church property. No sooner had they embraced the new faith than it was their first care to lay hands on the treasures of the churches and monasteries, to abolish the ancient worship of the Church, and to substitute the new in its place. Such of their subjects as remained true to their faith were forced to seek homes elsewhere.

A remarkable example of the sordid nature of the motives by which men high in rank were drawn to the cause of the reformers, is given us by Albert of Brandenburg, Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights. He shamelessly violated his vows, and became a traitor to his order and the Church, by following the counsel given him by Luther and Melancthon, "to abandon his vain and fantastic rule, to take a wife, and to convert Prussia, the property of the Order of Teutonic Knights, into a secular principality."

Next to Frederick of Saxony, and his successors, John and John Frederick, Protestantism found its principal support in the Landgrave Philip of Hesse. He had embraced the new doctrines in 1526, and after having seized on the Church property, to secure his spoils occupied himself industriously in forming treaties between all the Protestant powers. An immoral and profligate man, he had conceived the scandalous

design of marrying a second wife in addition to the one he had already living; but before doing so he demanded from Luther, Bucer, and Melancthon, a written approbation certifying that such a double marriage was regular and not opposed to the divine law. Since he at the same time gave them to understand that the refusal of his request might render him averse to the new doctrines, the approbation was drawn up according to his desire. The reason adduced in palliation of this concession sounds almost as though purposely meant to cast ridicule on the new manner of interpreting Scripture, and on the cause of the so-called pure gospel, namely, "that the Gospel did not forbid what the Old Testament had permitted, but that their poor little destitute Church stood in need of the protection of virtuous princes."

We thus see that Luther was sufficiently unscrupulous as to the means he took for spreading his new gospel. And in the same cause he had no hesitation, in his book "On the Falsely-named Spiritual Order," in openly representing the murder of bishops and the destruction of monasteries as a thing permitted and "only to be laughed at." And he calls those "dear children of God and true Christians who shall endanger their lives, goods, or honour, for the destruction of bishops and bishoprics."¹ No means indeed, would be likely to appear unlawful to the writer of the following passage:—"We punish thieves with the halter, murderers with the sword, heretics by fire; why then do we not slay with all manner of weapons these pernicious teachers of corruption, these popes, cardinals, bishops—this whole scum of the Romish Sodom?" To protect himself from the execution of the edict of Worms, he did not scruple to incite the people to rebel against the State and the Emperor, expressing himself towards the latter with the most unseemly violence, and calling upon Christians not to afford him support against the Turks. "Finally," he thus closes his seditious appeal, "I beg of all good Christians that they will help pray to God for all such miserable and blinded princes, with whom He has doubtless afflicted us in His anger, and whom we can neither follow nor aid against the Turks, because the Turks are ten times wiser and better than these our princes are."²

¹ See Riffel, *Christliche Geschichte der neuesten Zeit.*, vol. i. pp. 529 and 961.

² See Riffel, *Christliche Kirchengeschichte der neuesten Zeit.*, vol. i. p. 482.

"Many followed on the track which Luther had marked out, and these went yet further than he had done. In Switzerland, Zwinglius denied the real presence of our Lord in the most holy sacrament of the altar. In Geneva, Calvin taught that God has predestined a certain part of the human race, without any guilt on their part, to eternal damnation, and that for this reason He blinds and hardens the hearts of sinners.¹ The Anabaptists dreamed of a kingdom of Christ upon earth in which there should be neither property, law, nor government. Those things in the churches which Luther had still spared were now utterly destroyed by Zwinglius, Calvin, and other sectaries. Crucifixes, images of the saints, pictures and statues, masterpieces of art, were destroyed, and organs and altars torn down; graves even were opened, and the bones of the saints were trodden under foot and burnt."

When men ceased to acknowledge the authority of the Church in matters of faith, it became necessary to set up some other authority in its place; and this other, Luther said, was God's Word. The Bible, and this alone, would decide all things. In principle, all the reformers agreed to this; but difficulties soon arose as to the true meaning of the Bible. Luther maintained that it meant what he himself understood it to mean, and overwhelmed any one who ventured to interpret it otherwise with a flood of abuse and anathema. He was nevertheless forced, in order to save himself from having to shift the very foundation-stone of his whole system, to concede to each Christian the right of searching the Scriptures for himself, of interpreting them as he pleased, and of forming his faith accordingly. Owing to this, crowds of fanatics and sectaries sprang up, who all taught, collected disciples, and formed parties, each claiming to possess the only true faith.² Many surpassed Luther himself in the extravagance of their doctrines. Thus, for instance, it was said that original sin is an essential element in human nature, and that thence man is a perfect image, not of God, but of the devil;

¹ Inst. Rel. Christ.

² Everywhere men were contending about the meaning of the Holy Scriptures. The Papal Nuncio said with truth to the assembled Protestants in Nannburg: "There is not a city nor a house in Germany free from theological disputes. Wives argue with their husbands, and children with their parents, upon the interpretation of Scripture. In all societies, in taverns, over drink and play, even women and children are to be found pronouncing upon the highest truths."

that good works are not only not necessary but pernicious ; that man, when once he has been moved by grace, can sin no more, but may do what he will. It is impossible, however, to enumerate all the various sects and their blasphemous errors. We shall only notice those which spread the farthest and which still exist at the present day.

In Switzerland, Zwinglius, an apostate priest, made his appearance almost at the same time with Martin Luther as the apostle of a new doctrine. He was born at Wildhaus in the province of Toggenburg in 1484, and was ordained priest in 1506. He was first parish priest at Glarus, afterwards assistant priest at Einsiedlen, and lastly became a preacher in Zurich. His life as a priest had been dissolute, as he admits himself in one of his letters to Utinger (December 4, 1518). He had already in Einsiedlen shown himself hostile to pious Catholic practices. In Zurich, in 1519, he united himself yet more openly with the innovating party, and in his sermons proclaimed Holy Scripture to be the only rule of faith. He soon went still further, and had the boldness to demand of the Bishop of Constance that he would license the marriage of the clergy. The bishop for answer, peremptorily forbade the Council and Chapter of Zurich to countenance any such innovations. This provoked Zwinglius to a bolder defence of his heretical opinions. He wrote a letter addressed to all Switzerland, in which he plainly stated his profane doctrines, and in which he stigmatised the celibacy of the clergy as an invention of the devil. His teaching agreed in many points with that of Luther, but he wandered still further from the Catholic faith. He directly inculcated that God Himself was the author of sin. Original sin, he held, was not truly sin, but a disease merely, and not done away with by Baptism. He considered the sacraments to be signs only of grace already possessed. The Lord's Supper, he taught, was simply bread and wine, which were there the symbols of the Body and Blood of Christ. As the election of the children of God had taken place before the beginning of the world, so also from the beginning, sentence of damnation had, accord-

ing to the divine decrees, gone forth against the lost ; thus giving an example of God's avenging justice. Heathen heroes such as Hercules and Theseus, he placed together with Christ in the kingdom of the blessed. He allowed to subjects the right of deposing their rulers, and promised the people immunity from tithes and other contributions to the support of the clergy. That jurisdiction which had hitherto belonged to spiritual rulers, he transferred to the secular powers, and to these he also conceded the right to seize on Church property. These innovations were favoured by the Council of Zurich, and they in consequence spread freely and threatened the destruction of every Catholic institution. Convents were suppressed, their goods seized by the State, and marriage was permitted to all the clergy. Zwinglius, who had at first demanded toleration only, for his doctrine, and who had protested against any sort of authority in matters of faith, now desired to deprive the Catholics of Zurich of the holy mass, and never rested until it was entirely prohibited. Everything that could recall the Catholic worship was removed or destroyed. Altars were broken down and replaced by bare tables ; pictures and statues were taken away and burnt ; even the organs in the churches were disused, and the bells were no more allowed to be tolled for the dead.

Zwinglius quickly gained adherents. The rage for novelty soon spread to others of the Swiss cantons, especially of the larger and wealthier ones, which as a Protestant historian tells us, were then deeply sunk in moral corruption.¹ Those provinces, on the other hand, which had preserved purity and simplicity of manners, remained true to the Catholic faith.

To prevent further apostasy, and, if possible, to reclaim the erring, the Catholic cantons decided on inviting the Protestants to attend on a religious conference, explaining however beforehand, that they themselves would always remain faithful to the Church, and in no way desired to usurp

¹ Wirz, *Helvetische Kirchengeschichte*, vol. iv. p. 466.

her authority in deciding matters of faith. This conference took place in 1526 at Baden, in Engau, between the representatives of either side. Dr. Eck, professor at Ingolstadt, appeared on the part of the Catholics, and Œcolampadius was the chief speaker on the Protestant side. Eck gained the victory. Out of twelve cantons which had attended by deputy, nine had decided that Eck had convicted his opponents of heresy, and accordingly forbade any innovations in doctrine or worship. Protestantism, however, continued to spread. In its cause, the reformed cantons—especially Zurich—permitted the most scandalous acts of violence. They began by extorting leave for the free exercise of their worship, by the Protestants in the Catholic cantons, and scarcely had they obtained this than they endeavoured to deprive the Catholics of religious liberty. The mob was incited by Protestant preachers to riot and sedition. The Catholic priests were driven away, the convents and churches were destroyed, and the Blessed Sacrament flung on the ground and trampled under foot. In Basle the mob took possession of the arsenal, occupied the squares, and planted cannon in the streets. The most considerable among the Catholics were forced to fly, and so all opposition was silenced.

Whilst the teaching of Zwinglius was introduced with a high hand into the German cantons of Switzerland, another new and not less dangerous heresy was spreading itself in the French cantons. Its founder was Calvin. He was born at Noyon, in France, in 1509. While yet a student in Paris he had imbibed the poison of heresy by intercourse with the enemies of the Church, and by reading the works of Luther. He attracted attention by openly advocating the erroneous principles he had adopted, and was forced to leave the city. He then sought a wider field for the propagation of his pernicious doctrines. This he found first in Basle, where he preached for some time, and afterwards, in 1536, in Geneva, where heresy had already been introduced, and the Catholic worship banished by other false teachers. Two years after-

wards he was driven out of Geneva, but was recalled in three years' time, and remained there until his death in 1564.

Calvin in his teaching agreed in many respects with Luther. Especially he held the same fundamental error on justification, which, according to him, consisted not in man's true sanctification, but in the guilt of sin not being imputed to him. According to him, the ultimate fate of each man is fixed beforehand from all eternity through an absolute predestination. One part of mankind, the faithful namely, being destined to eternal happiness, are infallibly certain of salvation, and incapable of losing it by the greatest sins; whilst the other, the reprobate, are unalterably destined by God to eternal damnation, in order that so His justice may be revealed in them. He sought to explain this frightful doctrine by the most appalling and blasphemous statements: "that God," for instance, "finding cause to hate and to punish a portion of mankind, not only ordained the fall of the first man, but also forced the reprobate to add actual to original sin," &c. Concerning the Holy Eucharist he did not at first depart so far as Zwinglius from the Catholic doctrine; but when, in 1549, it was proposed to him to unite himself with the Zwinglians, he had no scruple in teaching with Zwinglius that the Lord's Supper was a figure only, of the Body and Blood of Christ. Like Zwinglius, Calvin cherished a great hatred to ceremonies, and banished all ornaments from the churches. His harsh and terrifying doctrines were softened in some measure by his followers, and thus again several new sects arose. Calvin did not spread his doctrine by preaching only; he sought to establish it by the most tyrannical despotism. Every one in Geneva had to bend beneath his harsh yoke. A revolt of the citizens caused by his insupportable religious tyranny was put down by the severest measures. Any one who spoke against him was mercilessly punished. The Spanish physician, Servetus, because he had in his writings scoffed at the dogma of the Blessed Trinity and censured Calvin's works, was suddenly seized while passing

through Geneva, cast into prison, and afterwards burned, together with his book.

Jacob Gruet had been executed before this on account of his having written threatening letters to Calvin, who had called him "a dog" from the pulpit. The Italian Gentiles too, who had upbraided him with error, only escaped death by a public retraction.

Calvin's doctrines spread quickly from Geneva into other countries. The fanatical hatred of his followers for the Catholic religion caused them to distinguish themselves above other sectaries by their zeal in propagating their own errors. It was counted a good and pious work among them to plunder and destroy churches and monasteries and to outrage the Blessed Sacrament in the most shocking manner. In Nismes, for instance, in 1561, they flung the consecrated hosts, together with the church books, pictures, and relics, on a lighted fire, and danced around it, crying that they would have neither mass, idols, nor idolaters. Like sacrileges were committed in many other places both in France and the Netherlands, to which this sect had spread. The Catholic churches were desecrated in every imaginable way, and many were pulled down. Even the very dead could not escape the rage of the Calvinists. Countless graves were torn open, and the bones of the buried scattered about, out of hatred of the Catholic faith to which they had belonged. Such outrages were not merely the sudden acts of an excited rabble; they were entirely in unison with the whole spirit of the sect, which counted as a meritorious work the extinction of the Catholic religion. It was the Calvinist leaders and preachers who, both by precept and example, incited their followers to exploits of this nature.

The inevitable result of Luther's doctrine, that all were to interpret the Scriptures for themselves, found its most complete demonstration in the sect of the Anabaptists. This sect came into being very soon after the rise of Luther; and its adherents, by placing their own interpretation on texts of Scripture, came to adopt the wildest and most extravagant

opinions. They held that the time was come for the universal establishment of a new Christian kingdom, in which there should be a complete community of goods, and no government, spiritual or temporal. Appealing to our Lord's words, "Go and teach all nations, and baptize them," this sect maintained that infant baptism was unlawful, and that baptism was to be only administered to adults after previous instruction. They received their name Anabaptists (re-baptizers) from their baptizing over again those who had been already baptized in infancy. They were not satisfied with merely preaching such doctrines, but they desired forthwith to found and spread this new kingdom. Thomas Münzer, the most distinguished leader of this sect, stirred up the people of Thuringia, assumed the authority of regent in Mühlhausen, and established re-baptism and community of goods; and finally he placed himself at the head of a band of insurgent peasants, with the object of introducing perfect equality amongst mankind by the banishment and murder of princes.

After their defeat and punishment in 1525, the Anabaptists scattered themselves through various countries, chiefly in Silesia, Sweden, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. Since the secular powers were everywhere against them they were unable to succeed in establishing their new kingdom. At last, however, in 1533, the city of Münster, in Westphalia, which had been incited to rebel against its prince-bishop by a Lutheran preacher, fell entirely into their power. The thousand years' reign of Christ, these enthusiasts imagined, was now come; in a short time, they said, God would destroy all tyrants from off the face of the earth, and Münster would be the New Jerusalem from which the universal dominion of the new kingdom should go forth. A most frightful condition of things ensued. The preachers of the sect, giving themselves out for prophets, ran like madmen through the streets, and summoned all to be re-baptized. Churches and convents were sacked, altars destroyed, and images of saints trodden under foot. Women ran wildly from place to place, and flung themselves on the ground, cursing and praying by turns. The rabble of the neighbouring towns were invited into Münster, and promised possession of every enjoyment. Polygamy even was introduced, and the most scandalous excesses committed without shame.

John Matthieszen, a baker of Haarlem, who proclaimed himself

to be a prophet, exercised a despotic power over all. He had all money and property collected and placed at the disposal of the rabble, and caused all books to be delivered up and burned, except only the Lutheran translation of the Bible. In his wild fanaticism he ventured boldly forth alone to smite with his staff the hostile army which lay before the city gates, and as soon as he appeared was struck down by the soldiers. The office of prophet was next assumed by John Bockhold, a tailor from Leyden. Knipperdolling, a weaver, who was also ambitious of the prophetic dignity, soon after gave out that he had received messages from heaven, announcing that it had been revealed to him that "all lofty things should be laid low." Upon this his followers at once began to pull down the church towers, but soon finding the work too hard they desisted. Another of these so-called prophets made known that he had received a command from heaven that John of Leyden should be made king over the whole earth. The tailor accepted the dignity, appeared in royal splendour, and styled himself the "Universal King of Justice." And woe to all who opposed his reign of terror. He proclaimed plurality of wives as a divine law, pronounced all former marriages dissolved, and threatened all dissentients with death. There being still some decent burghers who did not approve of these scandalous proceedings, a strong opposition party was formed. It was vanquished however, and Knipperdolling, whom John had appointed executioner, beheaded sixty-six men. The city was surrounded by hostile armies, and at last food ran short. Elizabeth, one of the king's seventeen wives, gave him back her rich ornaments, and entreated of him that he would allow her, and all who could bear their sufferings no longer, to leave the city. The tyrant however, struck off her head with his own hands, and he and the rest of his wives danced round her body in the market-place. At last the troops of the prince-bishop forced an entrance, and put a stop to the frightful state of confusion which had lasted for more than a year.

"Although these different reformers quarrelled amongst themselves and excommunicated one another, the doctrines of all, nevertheless, became widely diffused."

Nothing was more calculated to bring the so-called Reformation into disrepute than the quarrels and hostilities which so soon arose among its adherents. Whilst all parties agreed in putting forward a free inquiry into the meaning of the Bible as the fundamental principles of their teaching, yet none would tolerate any other interpretation than its own. And thus it came about that all the different sects were at variance with each other, anathematising and persecuting each other

with the most virulent hatred, and, when no other weapon offered, loading each other with the coarsest abuse and invective.¹ The injury done their cause by these disunions did not escape the reformers themselves. "It is indeed important," writes Calvin to Melanethon, "that posterity should not know of our differences; for it is indescribably ridiculous that we, who are in opposition to the whole world, should be, at the very beginning of the Reformation, at issue amongst ourselves." The whole fabric of the Reformation indeed, threatened to fall to pieces at its very rise through these internal divisions. One thing alone was able to save it from destruction, namely the temporal power. Luther saw this clearly, and accordingly placed his Church at the service of those secular rulers who had taken it under their patronage. They it was who now ruled over the shattered fabric of the Church, and decided on the adoption or rejection of formulas of belief. And the preacher who would retain his office was obliged to shape his doctrine accordingly. It was thus that the teaching of Luther, though altered and modified, was saved from extinction by the interposition of princes, and under their powerful protection spread itself through many countries. The greater number of the princes and magistrates of Northern and Middle Germany, followed the example of the Elector of Saxony, and joined the Lutheran party, and their subjects became with them a prey to the teachers of heresy. The latter in this manner gained possession of the domains of the German orders, Prussia, Livonia, and Courland; of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway; and in Southern Germany of the Palatinate and Würtemberg. Luther's

¹ Of Zwinglius and his colleague, (Ecolampadius, Luther wrote, "that they had a devilish, thoroughly devilish, superdevilish (eintuefelt, durchteufelt, überteufelt) blasphemous heart, and lying lips." Zwinglius, on the other hand, wrote to Luther, "We do thee no injustice when we reproach and condemn thee as a worse betrayer and denier of Christ than the ancient heretic Marcion." A violent quarrel took place even between Luther and his own ally Carlstadt. After having disputed together at Jena in the most unseemly manner concerning the Blessed Sacrament without coming to any agreement, Luther exclaimed at parting, "Could I but see thee on the wheel!" to which Carlstadt replied, "Mayest thou break thy neck before thou departest from this city."

doctrines penetrated also to Hungary and Transylvania, and even the territories of the Catholic princes of Germany were to some extent infected by them. It was the teaching of Calvin and Zwinglius, on the contrary, which had obtained the greatest hold in Switzerland, and which also had become widely spread in France, England, Scotland, and the Netherlands.

“All possible means were used to secure the victory of the Reformation. The principles of the heretics, together with bitter attacks and calumnies on the Catholic clergy, were scattered broadcast by means of pamphlets among the people. In many places force was used, and men were compelled by oppression and persecution to forsake the holy Catholic faith.”

As has been the case with all other heresies, lies and force were the weapons of which hell availed itself to cause men to fall away from the truth. Fanatical preachers, apostate priests and monks, spread themselves abroad in all directions, slandering the Pope and clergy, raising an outcry over the abuses of the Church, accusing her of falsifying and disfiguring Christian doctrine, and representing her teaching as uniformly pernicious, and their own as the pure and unadulterated Word of God. They presumed to call the holy sacrifice of the mass idolatry, and on account of their veneration of the saints, to stigmatise Catholics as idolaters and image-worshippers. To supply the want of oral teaching, pamphlets were scattered broadcast, in which the poison of heresy was conveyed to the people in a form which was often made attractive by wit and satire. Church, Pope, and all things holy were unsparingly held up to ridicule. The works of Luther, and those of his dissolute friend Hutten, which surpassed all others of the kind in virulence and obscenity, were in the hands of almost every one. Such lampoons, which were often illustrated with the most disgraceful pictures, were frequently offered for sale amongst edifying books at the church doors.

All these lying artifices however, were not sufficient to rob a whole people of the priceless treasure of faith. To effect this, despotic rulers were obliged to employ the most scandalous tyranny. “We do not find,” says a trustworthy Protes-

tant historian of our own day, "that the population of any one part of Germany ever declared unanimously for Luther's reform, except where the government and nobles first led the way. This is a fact which cannot be denied."¹ It is also certain that the general popular enthusiasm for Luther's doctrine and person which Protestant writers are accustomed to describe, did not exist. There were everywhere great numbers of pious Catholic Christians to whom the new teaching was an abomination. The very strongest evidence of this is to be found more than anywhere else, in Luther's own sermons, letters, and commentaries. "In the world," he writes, "we find polished, clever, learned, wise, pious, and respectable persons; but the wiser, more learned, and more respectable they are, the more unfriendly they show themselves to us."² He continually complains that nobles, magistrates, burghers, and peasants, wilfully suffered the preachers to starve, that thus the Gospel might come to naught. "Among the Papists," he says, "the sun shines, and they have all in abundance. But our pastors and ministers suffer want and are despised." His statement, made as late as 1532, was probably no great exaggeration, namely, that, with two or three sermons, he could have brought all men back again to Popery (Walch, vii. 913). In Saxony, the cradle of Protestantism, the people resolutely opposed it; and the same was the case elsewhere. When the Duke of Zweibrücken introduced the new doctrines into his territory in 1529, a very trustworthy witness, Kaspar Glasar (afterwards general superintendent) wrote, "We all lament that so few men follow the Gospel; a great part of the people

¹ Onno. Klopp, "*Kleindeutsche Geschichtsbaumeister*," p. 28. No attempts at disguise can free the Reformation from this stain. The fact that the introduction of the State-Church took place everywhere in contravention of the right of individuals to remain in the acknowledged faith of their fathers, may be verified by any one who traces the Reformation to its historical beginning. See the Protestant work intitled, "*Der evangel. Oberkirchenthum in Berlin über das Concil*," p. 36.

² "Many such passages, besides other proofs of what has been here stated, are to be found in "*Wird Deutschland wieder katholisch werden?*" Schaffh. 1859.

despise it, and some even persecute it." Hundreds of similar instances might be adduced.

How then did it happen, that in spite of the opposition of the Catholic populations, Protestantism gained such a complete victory in so many countries? We answer,—by means of force alone. As Melancthon had foreseen, the most insupportable tyranny took the place of the promised freedom of faith and conscience. According to the execrable maxim, "*Cujus est regio, illius et religio*,"¹ which then gained acceptance, the religion of each country depended on the "caprice of its reigning prince."² If the prince chose to go over to the reformers, his subjects had to go with him. Catholic worship was forbidden, Catholic priests were banished, and if any resisted the new order of things he was robbed of his goods, banished from the land, or conquered by imprisonment, hunger, tortures, and fear of death. In some cases the territories of Catholic rulers were forcibly seized and Protestantised by Protestant princes. Thus the Elector Frederick of Saxony in 1542 usurped the bishopric of Naumburg, banished the pious and learned bishop, Julius von Pflug, who had been elected by the chapter, and set in his place Nicholas Amsdorf, a Lutheran. And the more completely to show contempt for the episcopal dignity, this Amsdorf was solemnly consecrated bishop by Luther, whilst the temporal government of the see was undertaken by one of the elector's officials. In the same year the Landgrave Philip of Hesse, and the Elector of Saxony, conquered the zealous Catholic, Duke Henry of Brunswick, took possession of his states, and introduced Lutheranism by force of arms into the conquered territory. It was in this manner that the secular powers carried out the work of the Reformation. "It is indisputable," says Jurien, a Protestant writer, "that the Reformation was brought about by the power of the State authorities. It was introduced into Geneva by

¹ "Who rules the land, also rules the religion."

² "It is notorious that the Palatinate had changed its religion four times in sixty years. First it became Lutheran, then Calvinist, then Lutheran again, and lastly Calvinist.

the senate, and into other parts of Switzerland by the councils of the several cantons; into Holland by the States-General, and into Denmark, Sweden, England, and Scotland, by the King and parliament. The supreme power, moreover, in none of these instances limited itself to giving full freedom to the adherents of the Reformation, but proceeded further to take the churches away from the Papists, and to forbid them the open exercise of their religion."

This tyranny was the worst in the kingdoms of the north, and in England, Ireland, and Scotland, of which we shall speak further on. As early as the year 1520, Christian II., already infamous for his debauchery and cruelty, had, impelled by his desire to seize on Church property, and his jealousy of the higher clergy, sought to introduce Protestantism into Denmark, and to this end committed many oppressive acts towards the monks and bishops. His successor, Frederick I., pursued the same end by a continued persecution of the Church. After his death however, the bishops obtained the restitution of the rights and freedom of the Catholic Church, from the parliament (*Landtag*) at Copenhagen (1533). Christian III. however, was a personal friend of Luther's, and hardly had he come to the throne when he caused all the Catholic bishops to be seized and cast into prison.¹ This done, he possessed himself unhindered of the Church property, declared the Catholic religion to be done away with, and sought to reconcile the people to the change by promising a reduction of taxes and imposts. The way being thus prepared, the total abolition of the Catholic Church in Denmark was published by the parliament at Copenhagen in the most barbarous terms (1546). Catholics were pronounced incapable of inheriting property or filling public offices. Catholic priests were banished under pain of death, and those who harboured them were made punishable as though for harbouring robbers or murderers. And by the same tyrannical means Catholicism was destroyed in Norway and Iceland, both of which were under Danish rule.

The Icelanders declared in 1540 to the King of Denmark, that they would rather quit their country than forsake their faith, and it was only through the most unexampled tyranny that the destruction of the Church in Iceland was accomplished. The same may

¹ Luther wrote, with regard to this, testifying his satisfaction that the King had "rooted out" the bishops, and promised, moreover, to give him all the help he could in explaining and defending the deed.

be said of Norway. In this country there is still a subterranean church, whose almost inaccessible entrance is situated on the shore of a beautiful lake. It is called "St. Michael in the Mountain." Thither Catholics went, as to the catacombs of old, to hear mass in secret; and here the last priest spent his last days, long after the times of Christian III.

In Sweden too, the people clung with love to the ancient faith. When the Protestant preachers, brought to Stockholm by Gustavus Vasa, attacked it from the pulpit, they were pelted with stones, and driven from the church and city. And the people, taking arms, went to Upsala, to protect the Catholic archbishop from persecution. But, first by artifice and misrepresentation, and afterwards by open violence, the King succeeded in procuring the triumph of heresy. The Archbishop, Magnus Kunt, of Upsala, and the Bishop, Peter Jacobson, of Westervas, died martyrs in 1527. They were decorated in insulting mockery, one with a straw crown and the other with a mitre of bark, and seated backwards on lean horses, were led in procession through the town. After their execution their bodies were broken on the wheel and left to be devoured by the birds of prey.

The Lutheran form of worship was introduced throughout Sweden in 1529, but certain Catholic practices were retained for a time in order to deceive the people; and the places and even the titles of the Catholic bishops were taken by married Protestant pastors. These changes in religion and worship excited the greatest indignation among the people, and a general rebellion even seemed threatening. In many places the Catholic faith long continued to exist, and only died out at last because, one by one, the faithful Catholic priests were banished. The conversion of John III. gave some hopes for the re-establishment of the Church, but the zeal of this prince soon cooled, and his successor, Charles IX., who usurped the throne of his Catholic nephew, completely rooted out the faith in Sweden. After the year 1595 no Catholic dared remain there. In 1858, six women who had become Catholics were forced to leave the country, and were declared to have lost their rights of inheritance.

Heresy was also forcibly introduced into Hungary and Transylvania. In Transylvania it was first spread by some apostate monks. The city magistrate of Hermannstadt threatened with death all who did not either embrace the new doctrine or else leave the city within three days. Such as remained true to their religion, were abused, pelted with stones, and driven away. The priests were persecuted, many were robbed of their goods; those who resisted were branded, and the skin torn from their heads by the crown of hair left by the tonsure. Protestant preachers were forced on the

Catholic population, the bishop was murdered, and the Catholic clergy banished by the Council of State. The property of the bishoprics, convents, and churches was seized, and the new doctrines forced on the lower orders. Many men even provided against the return of their children to the Catholic faith by excluding them, in that case, from their wills.

The Germans had the largest share in the introduction of heresy into Hungary; and as at that time the King, Ferdinand, and John Zápolya were struggling for the throne, neither would venture on offering effectual resistance to the new doctrines.

The possessions of seven vacant bishoprics had been seized on by the nobles, and these became Protestant that they might keep what they had thus gained; and they secured the adherence of their vassals by the prospect which they held out to them of winning their country's freedom. Subsequently the greater part of Hungary was conquered by the Turks. And this caused heresy to spread so much the more quickly; for the bishops, robbed of their property, were unable to keep up a sufficient supply of clergy, and such faithful priests as yet remained, were, as in Transylvania, bitterly persecuted, slain, and tortured, and their churches taken from them by force. Before the middle of the seventeenth century five thousand churches had been violently seized, and at one time eight hundred out of the nine hundred parishes in the archbishopric of Gran were occupied by Protestant pastors. But with the new doctrine division and misery spread through the land.

SECTION XLIV.

ATTEMPTS AT REUNION—IRRECONCILABILITY OF LUTHER—COUNCIL OF TRENT—RELIGIOUS AND CIVIL WARS IN GERMANY AND OTHER COUNTRIES—THE REFORMATION IN ENGLAND, IRELAND, AND SCOTLAND.

“Many attempts were made and many negotiations undertaken by the Catholics for the re-establishment of peace in the Church. But Luther refused obstinately to be reconciled to the Supreme Pontiff.”

WHILST Germany was becoming more and more torn by the deplorable spirit of schism, the Catholics were using every endeavour to check the evil. Charles V. saw with the deepest grief the divisions of the empire and the impending ruin of the Catholic faith. He laboured for thirty years at

successive Diets, with unwearied patience and zeal, to reconcile the contending parties; but the tendency to conciliation shown both by the Emperor and the Catholic states served only to increase the arrogance of the heretics. At the Diet of Spires in 1529, the Catholic princes in the interests of peace proposed: "That such states as had hitherto observed the Edict of Worms, in which Luther's writings and doctrines were proscribed, should still continue to observe it; whilst the others, which had admitted of innovations which could not now be discarded without danger of tumult, should remain undisturbed until the assembly of the General Council; but that in such states Catholics should be allowed the free exercise of their religion, and especially that none should be prevented from saying or hearing mass." This very moderate proposal, which asked only toleration for the Catholics and their worship, was rejected by the Protestant states, who laid before the Emperor a formal protest against it, whence it was that they received the name of "Protestants." The following year, at the Diet of Augsburg, the Emperor made another attempt to obtain peace. The Protestant princes intrusted to Melancthon, a far more moderate man than Luther, the task of drawing up shortly, in a document known as the "Confession of Augsburg," a statement of their articles of faith and of the abuses which they repudiated in the Church. The harshness of Luther's doctrines was here much softened down, and in many of its articles this document coincided with Catholic teaching. In order, however, to justify the previous separation from the Church, it did not hesitate to palpably falsify her teaching, and to charge her with errors which she has ever repudiated. The Catholic theologians did not fail in their rejoinder to vindicate the true faith, but they were unable to effect a reconciliation, for the simple reason, that, as Melancthon himself says, the Protestant states "were fighting, not for the Gospel, but for their own power." Melancthon was much blamed for the concessions he had made, by his own party, and by Luther himself. The latter writes to him in great indignation: "They

do not please me at all, these attempts at unity of doctrine; for unity of doctrine is impossible unless the Pope will wholly lay aside his Popedom." Luther now no longer looked forward to the future council, to whose decisions he had before appealed in a document formally drawn up and signed by witnesses. As early as 1523 he said: "If a council commanded or allowed us the administration of the Lord's Supper under both kinds, we would receive only one, or none at all, in its despite." And later he declared: "Should the council say 'Yes,' we will say 'No;,' and should it say 'No,' then we will say 'Yes.'" He very well knew that his new doctrine would not be well received by a general council, and that union could only be effected by his renouncing it; he therefore directed all his efforts to widening the breach which divided his party from the Church. The invitation of the Holy Father to a general council only served further to inflame his anger against the Papacy, and it was in this mood that he drew up the Smalcaldic Articles in 1537, which were accepted by all his party, and which rendered reunion with the Church quite impossible. "The mass," it is there said, "is the greatest and most frightful abomination of Popery; the invocation of saints is idolatry, and the Pope himself, Satan and Antichrist. All that he has done or undertaken in his false, wicked, blasphemous, and arrogant tyranny, is a vain, devilish history, a business fatal to the Church, and destructive of the primary article of faith, the redeeming power of Christ." He bade farewell to the assembly at Smalcald with these words, "God fill you with hatred of the Papacy." When, later, the council was actually opened, and the Protestants were invited to it, he produced his last work, "The Papacy Founded by the Devil," which seems actually overflowing with the wildest rage. This was shortly before his death, which took place February 18, 1546. In this, his last attack on Rome, he seems to have summoned all his remaining strength. In it he surpassed himself in unseemly invective. The book was published ornamented with a filthy frontispiece, which no decent man could look at without disgust

and indignation. The Protestants, however, in 1545, after they had been invited to the Council of Trent, were not ashamed to distribute this book among the Catholics who attended the Diet of Worms.

“In 1545 the Holy Father assembled a general council at Trent, in the Tyrol. The doctrine of the innovators was examined and unanimously condemned. And at the same time wholesome decrees were passed concerning ecclesiastical discipline and the doing away of abuses. The Catholic Church gained fresh beauty and vigour through the labours of this council.”

After numberless obstacles had been removed, Pope Paul III. succeeded at last (December 13, 1545) in opening the so long and earnestly desired Council, at Trent, a town on the frontier which divided Germany and Italy.¹ The archbishops and bishops, together with the greatest theologians of the time, were there assembled, under the presidency of the Papal legate. The whole teaching of the innovators with regard to original sin, justification, the sacraments, both in general and in particular, the holy sacrifice of the mass, purgatory, indulgences, the invocation of saints, and the veneration of images and relics, was closely examined into; and the contrary doctrine of the Catholic Church was defined and explained with admirable clearness, on the grounds of Holy Scripture and apostolical tradition; and then, as in all previous councils, anathema was pronounced on all such as should venture to teach otherwise than the divinely-guided Church of God.² Wise and wholesome decrees and ordinances were also enacted; some for the repression of many evils and abuses which during the course of time had gained entrance into the

¹ Concerning the council Luther here says: “The Pope, cardinals, and all the rabble of his Papal Holiness should be caught, and their tongues cut out of their throats and nailed to the gallows. So they may hold a council on the gallows or in hell among all the devils.” This was the language of the “beloved man of God,” with other ribaldry too indecent to be quoted. How completely lost must all feeling of decency have been when such a “reformer” woke no feelings of shame in his adherents!

² The chief dogmatic decrees of the Council of Trent are given in their proper places in the first four volumes of this work.

Church; and others for the restoration of discipline among the clergy and people, for the education of pious and enlightened priests, and, above all, for the promotion of godliness and virtue among the faithful. All the decrees and decisions of the council bear so manifestly the impress of divine truth and wisdom, that no one who reads with a mind free from hostile prepossession, can fail to recognise in them the assistance and illumination of the Holy Ghost. War and the breaking out of the plague caused many interruptions in the sittings of the council, so that its twenty-fifth and last session was not over until eighteen years after its opening. On the 4th of December 1563, its decrees and transactions were subscribed by the two hundred and fifty-five fathers present, among whom were four legates, two cardinals (not legates), twenty-five archbishops, and a hundred and sixty-eight bishops, from all quarters of the globe. Before the council dispersed, all Christian princes were exhorted in God's name to endeavour zealously to obtain the universal acceptance and observance of its decrees, and themselves to set their subjects the example of faithful obedience. The proceedings of the council were ratified by Pope Pius IV. in the beginning of the following year.

This great assemblage will remain ever memorable in the annals of the Church, both from the number of holy and learned prelates who assisted at it, and from its many decisions and decrees, the scope of which far exceeded those of any preceding council. The Council of Trent derives, moreover, a special importance from the troublous times in which it was assembled, and the fatal character and rapid spread of the heresy on which it had to pronounce judgment; and even though its efforts to rescue those who had already fallen were vain, it yet stamped the error unmistakably in all its parts with the seal of condemnation, and thus opposed a powerful barrier to its further progress. It also instructed the faithful in the clearest manner concerning many articles of faith, and so secured them from the fraudulent attacks of their enemies. By its salutary ordinances, it as far as possible, rooted up from among the wheat the cockle which the enemy had sown, and awoke, evidently, and with the most blessed results, new life and zeal within the Church. Our own and all succeeding generations will ever view with thankfulness the issue of its labours.

“The Protestants were repeatedly invited to the council, which they had themselves first demanded for the settling of the dispute. They refused however to appear at Trent, and thus the unhappy schism continued, which involved the greater part of Europe in indescribable misery.”

Nothing was omitted on the Catholic side to induce the Protestants to attend the council. The popes had sent legates to Germany inviting the Protestant princes to send their theologians to Trent, and there openly to state their grievances. Safe-conducts for the journey and perfect security during the sitting of the council were promised to them. To please the Protestants, the city of Trent, which lay within the bounds of the German Empire, was chosen as the place of assembly, instead of an Italian town, as had at first been intended; and when, during their deliberations, some hopes arose that the Protestant theologians would come, the fathers immediately postponed a solemn sitting, for which the time had been already fixed, to a later date. This hope, however, was not fulfilled. The Protestants desired, as they said, a free council, by which they really meant a council in which they should be able to sit in judgment on the Church. The Church had now done all that lay within her power. The Protestants had voluntarily left her fold, alleging her to be full of abuse and corruption; they had formally separated themselves from her, and had formed themselves into a new Church, on a totally different basis, and now they wished to restore Christendom to apostolic purity. And how, we may ask, did they succeed in their attempt? Let us hear what Luther himself says. He writes in 1538: “Many say peace is destroyed, the world disquieted, the minds and souls of men are in confusion, and the worship of God and all lawful obedience is dissolved. ‘What good,’ say they, ‘has come of this gospel? we were better off before it.’” And what is Luther’s reply? Does he deny the accusation? No. “Thou complaineest,” he answers, “that our gospel has turned the world upside down. I reply, ‘God be thanked!’ Thus have I desired; and woe to me, wretched man, if it were not so;

for Christ says, 'I am not come to bring peace, but the sword.'"¹

We have already spoken of the bitter complaints made by Luther and his followers, of the increasing corruption of morals. "It were no wonder," he says in his indignation, "if God opened both the doors and windows of hell, or rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and sunk us all in the pit of hell, like Sodom and Gomorrah." Luther, by his godless teaching, had undermined the supports by which order and discipline were upheld, and he now saw with dismay the whole moral edifice tottering to its foundations, and giving place to full-blown anarchy. That this was so, modern historians most hostile to the Church, bear open testimony. "There was never a revolution," says Droysen, "which has more utterly, terribly, and unmercifully rooted up, overturned, and destroyed. Everything at one blow was uprooted and called in question; first in men's minds, and then, as an immediate consequence, in their actions, in all things relating to morality. All things, temporal and spiritual, were at once plunged into a state of chaotic disorder. Here was revolution in its most horrible form."² Another Protestant writer (a professor at the University of Halle) unhesitatingly says, "The Reformation is the greatest misfortune that Germany has ever experienced."

"Luther had preached freedom, and had reviled emperors, princes, and bishops; and the peasants who learnt the lesson were not slow in riding themselves of their master's yoke. They traversed the country in lawless bands, burning castles and monasteries, and practising terrible cruelties on the nobles and clergy. More than a hundred thousand perished in this frightful insurrection. Other religious wars followed, and at last the Thirty Years' War devastated our beautiful country and converted it into a theatre for the most horrible atrocities."

Very soon after Luther's rise, the results which might be expected to follow among the people, from his preaching of Gospel liberty, began to be apparent. It had been said

¹ Seckendorf, vol. iii. p. 187. This is a fresh proof of Luther's skill in distorting the text of Scripture.

² Onno Klopp, "*Kleindeutsche Geschichtsbaumeister*," p. 79.

already that Luther's teaching cut at the root of all authority and obedience; and not in vain had Pope Adrian VI. warned the princes assembled at Nuremberg, by his legates, that the insurrection against ecclesiastical authority was but a prelude to revolt against secular government. The writings of Luther, zealously spread abroad amongst the people, and filled as they were with the most violent abuse of the Emperor, princes, and bishops, did not fail in their operation. His summons to rid themselves of the yoke of priests and monks, the peasants naturally extended to the service, rent, and tithes, which they owed to the bishops and the monasteries;¹ and fancying they were fighting for the Gospel, they thought it lawful to rise against those masters who had been represented to them as tyrants and persecutors of the Word of God. This fatal consequence of his teaching did not escape Luther himself. As early as 1522 he writes, "I fear there will in a short time be an uproar, which will destroy all princes and rulers throughout Germany." In 1525 the popular ferment reached a crisis. The revolt of the peasants spread rapidly over Swabia, the Rhine provinces, Franconia, and as far as Thuringia and Saxony. Joining themselves together in large bands, the insurgents traversed the country, burning and murdering wherever they came. The castles of the nobles, the churches and monasteries, were plundered and burnt. In Weinsberg, whither many gentlemen had fled for refuge, the Count of Helfenstein and seventy knights were cruelly put to death; they were enclosed in a field and forced to run upon spears held out before them, a piper playing the while. Meanwhile the princes had collected their forces, and having routed the insurgents, proceeded to take fearful vengeance on them. In Franconia alone 11,000 were slain, 6000 in Wurtemberg, 10,000 in other parts of Swabia, and 20,000 in Alsace. It is said that more than 100,000 peasants were killed in battle or executed in this frightful insurrection. The peasants and mountaineers of Thuringia had been at the

¹ See Döllinger, "*Handbuck der Kirchengeschichte*," vol. ii. sec. 162.

same time stirred up to revolt by Münzer. They gathered round him at Mühlhausen, and made marauding expeditions in the neighbourhood. Before the battle of Frankenhausen, in May 1525, Münzer incited his troops by an enthusiastic address, promising them that he would catch all bullets aimed at them in his sleeves. The enemy's fire, notwithstanding, thinned their ranks so fast that they fled in utter confusion. Münzer himself was taken and publicly executed, after having been first reconciled to the Church.

The cause of this rising was less the heavy oppression under which the peasants had laboured, than the wild passion for liberty which had taken possession of them in consequence of the new teaching. Of the twelve articles which they drew up and required the princes to accept, the first contained the demand that they should be allowed to choose their own preachers, who should preach the pure Gospel to them, without human addition, teaching, or comments; whilst in the last it was said, "These articles must be accepted or refuted out of the Bible." The insurgents desired as arbiters, besides the Catholic Archduke Ferdinand, and the Lutheran Elector Frederick of Saxony, Luther himself, Melancthon, Zwinglius, and several other Lutheran preachers. The leaders of the peasant troops also had been for the most part Lutheran preachers, who had urged them on to fight for Gospel liberty, and had organised the insurgent bands under the name of "the Christian evangelical army." When Luther saw that his doctrine was gaining an evil name through the frightful atrocities of the peasants, he published his work "Against the Robbing and Murdering Peasants," in which he recommends that they should be, both publicly and privately, put to death like mad dogs; adding, that he believed there was not a single devil now left in hell, but that they had all gone into the peasants; and that a prince "now might better earn heaven by bloodshed than by prayer," &c. To this Erasmus promptly answered, "Thou wilt not acknowledge the peasants, but they acknowledge thee; their rising is but one consequence of thy Reformation, and thine own work."

The seeds of discord sown by the reformers, were not however destroyed by the crushing of the peasants' revolt. As the Lutheran Church had broken loose from the Papacy, so had the Lutheran princes from the empire. It could not be otherwise. For if, as Luther taught, the Pope was Antichrist, then the Emperor was the champion of his antichristian rule, and the sworn enemy of the pure Gospel. In order to excite the people against the Emperor, the Protestant princes needed only to tell them that the Protestant religion was attacked, and that the Gospel was in danger. A reliable historian of our own time truly remarks: "Luther's doctrine was made use of by the German princes as a lever with which to burst the bonds of empire, and as a standard under which to array themselves against the Emperor and his authority.¹ The Protestant princes did indeed, in 1531, enter at Smalcalde into a league, offensive and defensive, against the Emperor. They were supported by the French King, Francis I., who was then endeavouring to obtain for himself the imperial crown, and behaved in a manner so contumacious that in 1546 the Smalcaldic war broke out, and ended only in 1547, with the Emperor's victory at Mühlberg, and the capture of the leaders, the Elector Frederick of Saxony, namely, and the Landgrave Philip of Hesse. A few years later, in 1552, the false and thankless Elector Maurice of Saxony, the head of the Protestant states, fell suddenly on the Emperor at Innsprück, and forced him to fly into Carinthia. In this enterprise the elector was aided by Henry II. of France, to whom he made over in return the bishoprics of Metz, Toul, Verdun, and Cambrai. The Emperor gave his concurrence to the treaty of Passau, but notwithstanding this agreement, so favourable to the Protestants, the fierce Albert, Margrave of Brandenburg-Culmbach, continued to ravage the bishoprics of Würzburg and Bamberg, and to plunder the convents and monasteries. "All," as W. Menzel says, "in the name of the Gospel." He burned villages with their inhabitants, and left

¹ Onno Klopp, "*Geschichtsbaumeister*," p. 138.

a number of his hostages, among whom were eighty of the most respected citizens of Bamberg, to perish in a tower, partly from hunger, and partly from the stench of the corpses which none were suffered to remove.

After all endeavours to put an end to the religious strife, whether by the council or by religious conferences, had failed, it was sought by the Treaty of Augsburg in 1555, to restore at least external order. What was thus obtained however, was rather a truce than a lasting religious peace. The very conditions of the treaty gave rise to endless irritations. The Protestants, who were only disposed to observe them in so far as they were favourable to themselves, continually infringed them, and yet never ceased complaining of the injuries they had sustained. No Diet passed without complaints being brought before it on both sides of breaches of religious peace. The agitation continually gained strength. In the very heart of the German Empire, beginning with the Calvinist states, a revolutionary party was formed against the Emperor and the Catholic states; this party formed alliances with foreign powers, England, France, and Holland, and waited only a favourable opportunity for revolt.

Such a one at length occurred. On the 23d of May 1618, the discontented Protestants of Bohemia rose in open rebellion, flung the royal councillors out of the windows of the castle, made themselves masters of the government, and placed the Calvinist Elector-Palatine, Frederick V., the head of the Protestant union in Germany, on the throne, instead of the lawful King, Ferdinand II. Thus the flame of war was lighted which quickly spread over all Germany. Industriously fanned and nourished by the hostile foreign powers, it continued to rage for thirty years, and overwhelmed our country with misery.

It is an undeniable fact that religion was by no means the only motive which actuated the Protestant states in bringing about the war. They desired, with the help of their foreign allies, to destroy the imperial rule, and to increase their own power; and the better

to attain their treacherous object they sought to give a religious complexion to the war, as though it had been undertaken in order to protect the new gospel from the tyranny of the Catholic Emperor. We cannot nevertheless deny, that this war was one of the bitter fruits of the unhappy Reformation. For the Reformation it was that had torn Germany asunder, and sown discord between the states of the Empire and their common head. This disunion directed the ambitious schemes of the King of Sweden, Gustavus Adolphus, towards Germany, and gave him hopes of securing the imperial crown for himself. This disunion too it was, which favoured the treacherous designs of the French minister, Richelieu, for the overthrow of the German Empire and the fall of the house of Hapsburg. We have not space to follow further the course of this war. Never has a divine judgment so terrible fallen on Germany. The horrors and cruelties practised during this period by the savage troops, especially the Swedish, are too frightful to contemplate. So fiercely had the war raged, that at its conclusion the population of Germany was reduced to one-half, or, as some even say, to one-third of its former number. The great cities had become poor and almost emptied of inhabitants, while in the smaller towns scarcely any were left alive. The villages for the most part had been burned to the ground. Men devoured the most horrible food from sheer hunger. The land, once so blooming, had become like a wilderness. Through the Peace of Westphalia, which was concluded in Münster in 1648, many provinces were made over to the foreign nations who had helped to ruin Germany, and thus the last shadow of the imperial power departed; the bond which had united the states was sundered, and "the way thus paved for the utter dissolution of the ancient and venerable body-politic, and for all the shame and misfortune which in later times have been so abundantly poured forth over Germany."¹

"In other lands too, wherever the new teaching spread, civil and religious wars were kindled. Zwinglius fell in Switzerland fighting against his own countrymen. In France the Calvinists, or Huguenots, as they were then called, waged a long and devastating war against the throne and the altar. Priests, monks, and nuns, were murdered wholesale. Towns and villages were laid waste; and many thousands of churches, some of them most splendid monuments of Christian art, were burnt or pulled down. England too, suffered severely for the apostasy into which she had been led by King Henry VIII., who renounced his allegiance to the Catholic Church on account of the Pope's refusal to permit him to divorce his lawful wife and marry another. Blood flowed

¹ Döllinger, a. a. O. § 166.

there in streams. One of Henry's own successors, Charles I., perished on the scaffold by the hands of rebels who boasted themselves of their pure religion."

Germany did not suffer alone for her apostasy from the Catholic faith. The evil seed of religious discord everywhere bore bloody fruit. In Switzerland the Zwinglians tyrannised over the Catholic cantons, refusing to hold any intercourse with their inhabitants, and, "for the honour of the gospel," cutting them off from the necessities of life. The Catholics, finding their complaints not listened to, at last were forced to take arms in their own defence. At the battle of Keppel the poor herdsmen fought bravely for their faith and freedom. Zwinglius, who with wild violence had driven affairs to this bloody arbitration, encouraged his followers to the battle, and himself fought in full armour. But the Zurichers were defeated and forced to fly, and Zwinglius himself was left mortally wounded on the field. He was asked whether he would reconcile himself to the Church by confession, but refused, and received his deathblow without shrinking. His body was burnt as that of an obdurate heretic. It was not till after much blood had been shed that outward peace was restored.

France too, soon experienced the bitter fruits of the Calvinism which had crept in from Switzerland. Its adherents, who were there called Huguenots, became bolder and more unmanageable, owing to their being favoured by Margaret of Valois, sister to Francis I., Queen of Navarre. For this reason Francis I., and his successor, Henry II., although both steadily upheld the Protestant princes in Germany, found it necessary to adopt severe measures towards the French Huguenots, and to bring into force the old penal statutes against sects dangerous to the state. Of this, however, none had less right than the heretics to complain. Calvin had so treated all who differed from him, and in his "True Exposition of the Errors of Master Servetus," himself taught that heretics were to be punished with the sword. His followers held the same opinion, especially the celebrated Beza, who published

a fanatical work on the subject. In France, as in other countries, the Reformation afforded a welcome opportunity for political intrigue. After the death of Henry II., in 1559, some of the great nobles, headed by the Prince of Condé, leagued with the Huguenots to drive out the Catholic party of the Guises, and secure to themselves the greatest influence in the state. Their ambition brought about a frightful civil war, in which party hatred and religious fanaticism raged in full fury. This war began in 1560, and lasted, with some interruptions, until 1628, a period of about seventy years; and long afterwards the fire, which continued to smoulder beneath the ashes, burst at times into flame. The Prince of Condé, at the head of the insurgent Huguenots, pillaged towns and laid whole provinces waste. Deeds of cruelty took place of which the pen refuses to write. Churches and convents were burned down, the tombs of kings dishonoured, and the most precious relics of the saints profaned. Priests and monks were murdered, not unfrequently by being thrown from the towers of their churches. At Plessis, near Tours, the insurgents broke to pieces the coffin of St. Francis of Paula; and, on finding the body incorrupt, they dragged it through the streets, and threw it into a fire, made with the wood of a great cross. They also destroyed the coffin of St. Bonaventure at Lyons. At Orthez, in Bearn, three thousand defenceless Catholics, including women, children, and old men, were murdered at one time. At St. Severe there is a precipice down which two hundred priests were thrown. At Nismes four hundred of the chief Catholic inhabitants fell victims, amongst many others, to this raging fanaticism. They were dragged from their houses, or out of the churches, and imprisoned, and during the night murdered with cold-blooded cruelty, and flung down a deep well. This massacre, which became infamous under the name of the "Michelade," took place on St. Michael's Day, 1567. The Baron des Adrets forced his Catholic prisoners to throw themselves down from towers on the pikes of his soldiers, and made his own children dip their hands in Catholic blood. Another of the Huguenot

leaders, Briquemont, was accustomed to wear round his neck a collar made of the ears of slain priests. All the monks of the great abbey of Grand Champ were stabbed, except one, who, having tried to save himself by flight, was burned alive. In the province of Dauphiny alone two hundred and fifty-six priests and a hundred and twelve monks were murdered, and towns and villages innumerable burned to ashes. The whole number of priests and monks killed from the year 1560 cannot be reckoned at less than four thousand, and twenty thousand churches are said by some to have been destroyed. Here too, we are forced again to remark that these religious wars were not only allowed of but zealously promoted by Protestant theologians and preachers. These last accompanied the armies and urged on the insurgent troops. Beza, who was the head of his sect after Calvin, had declared the conspiracy formed for the capture of the King and the murder of the Guises to be a praiseworthy enterprise, and represented the civil war as a duty to the chiefs of the Huguenot party; and the general assembly of the Calvinists at Orleans, in 1562, implored the blessing of Heaven upon the undertaking. The atrocities perpetrated by the Huguenots, unfortunately, but too often inflamed the rage of the Catholics to an ungovernable height, and urged them to deeds of fearful retaliation. No injustice can however be greater, than to make the Church answerable for outbreaks of wild passion, such as she ever condemns.¹

¹ This is especially true of the frightful massacre which took place in Paris, A.D. 1572, on the night of St. Bartholomew. It was the offspring of a low and cruel policy, which sought to rid itself by assassination of domestic enemies who had for many years menaced the security of the throne. Charles IX., influenced by his mother, Catherine de Medici, had given orders for the assassination of one of the most dangerous of the Huguenot leaders, Admiral de Coligny, together with his principal adherents, for the reason, it was stated, that a conspiracy had been discovered against the King, the royal family, and the chiefs of the Catholic party. Once roused, the savage thirst for blood raged far more wildly than the King had contemplated its doing, and extended to other French cities. The number of Calvinists slain cannot be accurately estimated, but it has been much exaggerated by hostile writers. According to some it was not

Calvinism showed the same spirit of tyranny in the Netherlands. Here too, a destructive war broke out. The Spanish King, Philip II., treated the heretics with inflexible severity, and nominated as governor of the province the stern Duke of Alva, who believed that their resistance might be stifled in the blood of their leaders. The ambitious Prince William of Orange, however, placed himself at the head of the malcontents; and the obstinate contest which followed, ended in 1579 with the loss to Philip of the seven northern provinces, a loss in which his successor, Philip III., was obliged, after a useless struggle, to acquiesce. As early as the year 1582, William of Orange forbade the practice of the Catholic religion in the States-General, as they were called; and Catholics, especially priests and religious, were treated by the Dutch Calvinists with unexampled cruelty. Two officers of the Prince of Orange, Vandermerk and Sonoi, wherever they came slew all the priests and religious on whom they could lay hands. Of the former it is said that, in the year 1572 alone, the guiltless priests and peasants whom he had put to death outnumbered the Protestants killed by Alva during the whole time of his regency. A Protestant author too relates, on good contemporary authority, horrible stories of the cruelties practised by Sonoi on the Catholics of the north of Holland. Some, who had survived the scourge and the rack, were wrapped in cloths dipped in spirits of wine, and were then set on fire and so miserably burned. Others, too, were burned on the most sensitive parts with sulphur and pitch. Some were killed by want of sleep, guards being set over them who struck and tortured them whenever wearied nature caused them to sink into unconsciousness. Others, again, were given no food but salt herrings, no water or any other drink being supplied them, so that they died of thirst. Others were stung to death by wasps, or devoured alive by rats which were shut up with them in chests.¹ (For an account of the nineteen martyrs of Goreum, who won their glorious victory on the 9th of July 1572, see vol. iv. p. 290.) This persecution of the Catholics was not confined to Holland only, but extended itself to all the Dutch colonies of the New World. The Catholic missionaries who preached the faith to the heathen were specially objects of hatred. Forty Jesuits on

above two thousand, while some say four thousand, and others again eight thousand. (See the *Civiltà Cattolica*, series vi. vol. x. p. 281, &c.) When Pope Gregory XIII. thanked Heaven solemnly for the news, it was because it had been represented at Rome, as at the other courts, that the French King and kingdom had been saved by the providential crushing of a conspiracy formed by the admiral and the Huguenots.

¹ See Milner's "Letter to a Prebendary," p. 82.

their way to Brazil for this purpose, were put to death at one time.

In England the apostasy into which the nation had been led by Henry VIII. bore the most melancholy fruit. Henry had strenuously opposed the German reformers, and had been in consequence honoured by Pope Clement VII. with the title of "Defender of the Faith." But an unworthy passion prevailed where Luther had been powerless. Because the Pope refused to sanction the King's project of divorcing his lawful wife, Catherine of Aragon, and taking another in her place, Henry cut himself off, in 1534, from the communion of the See of Peter. An oath was drawn up by which all were required, under pain of death, to acknowledge the King as the head of the English Church. The venerable Bishop of Rochester, John Fisher, who was an ornament to his sacred calling, and the pious and virtuous chancellor, Sir Thomas More, represented to Henry the criminality of his conduct, and steadily refused to take the oath. Neither age nor merit were any protection to them, and they both died on the scaffold, 1535. Forrest, the Queen's confessor, was burned for writing against, and refusing to acknowledge, the royal supremacy. Even St. Thomas à Becket, who had suffered martyrdom centuries before, was solemnly tried and sentenced as a traitor, because of the boldness with which he had defended the rights of the Church. His bones were burned, his images broken, and the treasures seized which the piety of the faithful had accumulated centuries before at his tomb. Not only did Henry persecute the faithful of the Church, but the women whom he successively married one after another fell victims to his anger. During the minority of his son, Edward VI., Calvinism was introduced into England under the auspices of Crammer, who was afterwards burned during the reign of the Catholic Queen Mary, who laboured strenuously for the restoration of the ancient faith.

A hard time began for the Catholics of England with the acces-

sion of Queen Elizabeth, the illegitimate daughter of Henry VIII., who took possession of the throne after the death of Mary. In order to secure the crown, which of right should have belonged to the Catholic Queen Mary Stuart of Scotland, Elizabeth set herself to bring about the complete destruction of the Catholic religion. Such as refused to take the oath of supremacy were dealt with as guilty of high treason. Catholic priests were cruelly persecuted, and those who harboured them punished with imprisonment or even with death. The following example shows with what barbarity such sentences were executed. Mrs. Margaret Middleton (or Clitherow), the wife of a rich citizen of York, had kept a Catholic priest in her house for the education of her children, and was in consequence sentenced to death. She was stretched on the ground, and her hands and feet bound to posts. A sharp stone was placed beneath her back, and a heavy door laid upon her, upon which weights were piled until the body of the Christian sufferer was crushed, and she expired, saying repeatedly, "Jesus, Jesus have mercy on me!" Before 1588 twelve hundred Catholics had already fallen victims to the persecution. In England alone, during the last twenty years of Elizabeth's reign, one hundred and forty-two priests were hanged, drawn, and quartered, for their faith, ninety priests and religious died in prison, one hundred and five were banished for life, and sixty-two laymen of consideration suffered martyrdom. The persecution raged with equal fury throughout Catholic Ireland. There, amongst many other victims, eighty-seven priests or religious were put to death for their faith. In 1579 it was desired to force the Catholic Archbishop of Cashel to take the unrighteous oath. After having been cruelly racked, top-boots were put on him, which were then filled with quicklime and water, and were so left until his legs were burned to the bone. After many other barbarous tortures, he was hanged with one of his companions. Before his death, he summoned him who had been his persecutor to meet him within ten days before the judgment-seat of God. And this man did indeed die within the appointed time, amidst frightful torments.

Priests were often beaten with stones on their shorn crowns till their brains were exposed. Pins were run beneath the nails of others, or the nails themselves torn off. Some were racked, or pressed beneath heavy weights; others were disembowelled while yet living, or had the flesh torn from their bodies with currycombs.¹ The persecution still continued under Elizabeth's successor, James I., the son of Mary of Scotland; and, owing to the violent efforts of a fanatical party, the laws against Catholics were made still more

¹ See Milner's "Letter to a Prebendary," p. 81.

oppressive ; but the milder temper of the King caused executions to be fewer than during the last cruel reign.

It was left however, for the unfortunate King Charles I. to reap the full fruits of England's unhappy apostasy. Side by side with the Episcopal or High-Church party, who owned the King as their head, had grown up the sect of Puritans or Presbyterians. These last hated prelacy, and desired to abolish every vestige which yet remained of Catholic worship. The influence of this party continually increased, and they soon made open war against the crown. The King was defeated and taken prisoner. But the confusion only increased. A new party soon formed itself, which denied the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian synods, and claimed full independence for every religious body. At the head of these Independents, as they were called, was the fierce and hypocritical Oliver Cromwell. They soon gained the upper hand, seized the King's person, and brought him to trial, as an oppressor of religion and liberty, before a court whose judges were animated with rage and hatred against him, their lawful sovereign. He was sentenced to death, and beheaded on a scaffold erected before the windows of his own palace. The nation was aghast at the crime, but Cromwell's "army of saints" held them down with an iron hand. Dreadful now was the lot of the poor Irish. Their estates were taken from them, and they themselves reduced to beggary. Barbarous laws made them almost into the serfs of their Protestant oppressors, and twenty thousand were sold to the West Indies as slaves. The exercise of their religion was made so difficult, that the inflexible constancy with which they have ever clung to it, in spite of the heavy persecutions which even yet in some degree weigh upon them, seems almost miraculous.

In Scotland, John Knox, a violent fanatic, was especially active in furthering the destruction of the Catholic religion. In 1560 Calvinism was introduced by parliament, and the profession of the ancient faith made punishable by death. The Catholic Queen, Mary Stuart, was powerless to stem the current. Saving nothing of her own but her faith, she fled in 1568 to England, to the protection of Elizabeth, who, having treacherously offered her a refuge, threw her into prison, whence, after a captivity of nineteen years, she was brought out to perish on the scaffold.

SECTION XLV.

SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE HEATHEN—ST. FRANCIS XAVIER
THE APOSTLE OF INDIA AND JAPAN—DIFFUSION OF THE FAITH IN
CHINA—PERSECUTION IN CHINA AND JAPAN—INTRODUCTION OF
CHRISTIANITY INTO AMERICA—THE PARAGUAY MISSIONS.

“What the Church had lost by apostasy in Europe she was more than repaid by the numberless conversions which took place in other parts of the world. Her missionaries went forth in all directions and preached her saving truths with the most wonderful results.”

WE have just been contemplating one of the saddest pages in the whole history of the Church. We have seen her, the exalted Bride of Christ, the nursing mother of mankind, by numbers faithlessly forsaken, mocked, scorned, and persecuted with bitter hatred. But side by side with this sad picture we can point to another as joyful. Viewed from another point, we see the Church of the sixteenth century everywhere gloriously triumphant. Just at the time when heretics were accusing her of having fallen into error, and of having been forsaken by the Spirit of God; just when millions were blaspheming her, and turning from her with hatred and contempt, it pleased God to exalt her before their eyes, and to show unmistakably that she, and she alone, was the Church which He had founded, and with whom He had promised to abide until the end of time;—that glorious and wonderful Church which had been foretold by the prophets, in which the Lord was to set His throne, and rule from one sea to the other, and to the uttermost ends of the earth. While the so-called Reformation was everywhere bringing forth the fruits of death, discord, and strife, devastating wars, with decay of virtue and morality, the Catholic Church was unfolding her most blessed results. From east and west, from north and south, new tribes were emerging to whom the Gospel was as yet unknown, and who lay deep in the dark shadow of death.

At the end of the fifteenth century, God had guided on a certain course the ships of the Spanish and Portuguese mariners. In 1486 Bartholomew Diaz reached the southern point of Africa, which King John II. of Portugal joyfully named the "Cape of Good Hope." Twelve years later the Portuguese Vasco de Gama, by doubling this same promontory, reached the east coast of Africa, and continued his voyage to the East Indies. While a road was thus opened to Western Christendom, a new world was just appearing in the far west. In 1492 Christopher Columbus, a Genoese, discovered the islands of Cuba, San Domingo, &c., in the West Indies, and thus prepared the way for the discovery of the American continent. What a field was thus opened for apostolic zeal! In both hemispheres innumerable tribes, hundreds and thousands of human beings, were awaiting the saving hand that should free them from the chains of heathenism; for the curse of sin weighed heavily upon them. Barbarous and brutal, they led a wandering life almost like that of irrational beasts in the forests, their numbers thinned by savage warfare, and not unfrequently by human sacrifices and cannibal feasts. All were plunged in a miserable idolatry, and knew nothing of their Saviour, of the saving graces of the Church, or of the blessings of Christianity. Most joyful and consoling it is to see how hundreds of zealous missionaries went forth from all parts of Europe; how they bore every toil and privation, and recked nothing of dangers by sea or by land, if so they might save immortal souls! The days of the first apostles seem again to have returned and brought with them the same ardent charity and heroic courage, the same grand self-devotion with its wonderful results, and the same miraculous assistance from heaven. The praises of God and of our Lord were soon being sounded in the tongues of all peoples. From the islands and the farthest lands, the nations came forth to offer their homage to the King of glory. In the mouth of these babes the Spirit of God perfected praise.

"The work accomplished by St. Francis Xavier alone is almost in-

credible. He crossed the wide ocean, burning with zeal for the salvation of the heathen. Having landed on a foreign shore, he would walk through the streets of the town, and with a little bell summon the children to his instructions. They gladly came to listen to the holy man who told them so movingly of their loving Saviour. They repeated what they had so learned at home, and brought the grown-up people to come and hear the preacher also. It was thus that Xavier began. God rewarded his zeal, and granted to him, as to the first apostles, the power of healing the sick, raising the dead, calming tempests, and, in short, of working miracles of the most astonishing kind. He hastened unweariedly from country to country, from island to island, throughout the regions of India and Japan, and in the short space of ten years converted many nations and kingdoms to Christ. He himself tells us in one of his letters that in a single month he had baptized ten thousand heathen."

St. Francis Xavier is among the most glorious of apostolic missionaries. He was sent out by Pope Paul III. in the character of apostolic nuncio to India, when John III., the pious King of Portugal, asked for missionaries for his eastern possessions. But it was not merely to a single province, but to a whole world of peoples and nations, that God had called him. The apostolic zeal which he displayed during the ten years, from 1542 to 1552, proved him to be a chosen vessel of grace. On landing in Goa, he found the town in a state of fearful moral depravity. With the co-operation of the bishop of the place, he directed his first efforts to the recovery of the erring. He won over the children and slaves by his kindness and gentleness, and then preached publicly with wonderful effect. The most obstinate sinners were terrified by the power of his words, and allured by the irresistible charm of his divine charity. The aspect of Goa was entirely changed. Christian virtue flourished, and the faith was glorified in the eyes of the heathen. A college was founded in the city for the education of native children as catechists.

At Goa St. Francis Xavier learned that on the Fishery Coast, as it was called, there was a tribe which had been indeed for the most part baptized, but was Christian merely in name. He set out at once, and turned his whole energy to forming this neglected race into a model Christian community. Concerning this toilsome work, he wrote himself in his letters to Europe: "I went through the villages bell in hand, collecting all I met, great and small, and instructed them in the Christian doctrine. The children easily learned it by heart in a month, and when they knew it rightly, I commissioned them to teach it to their parents, servants, and neighbours. On Sundays I assembled the men, women, boys, and girls in the chapel. All came with incredible joy, and with an ardent longing to hear God's Word." Francis first explained to them the Apostles'

Creed, and then the Ten Commandments, and then taught them the "Our Father" and the "Hail Mary." Numbers of the people resolved on leading a Christian life, and Francis had so many to baptize at one time, that his voice and arm often failed him. After working some time in Goa, he passed on to the kingdom of Travancore. He found it quite sunk in idolatry; but his preaching there bore such fruits that he was able to announce in a letter to Europe that in one month he had baptized about ten thousand heathens. The King, a dissolute man, shrunk himself from conversion, but he was so filled with admiration of the wonderful apostle that he caused it to be given out that the "Great Father" was to be obeyed like himself. St. Francis founded forty-five churches along the coast, and the country was Christian when he left it. His words were powerfully supported by the holiness of his life. Notwithstanding his many labours and toilsome journeys, he devoted himself to the strictest practice of penance. His food was that of the poorest of the people. By night he slept never more than three hours, and that upon the bare ground in a fisherman's hut. All the rest of his time he gave up to prayer and to the service of his neighbour. Prayer it was that gave him strength for his superhuman toils and exertions. In prayer God overwhelmed him with such superabundant consolation and interior joy, that he often implored Him to hold His hand, crying out repeatedly, "It is enough, Lord! it is enough!"

The fame of the saint spread everywhere. Many envoys came from heathen lands to invite him to visit them. He sent a priest to the island of Manaar, near Ceylon, and Christianity made great progress there. In vain a tyrannical king stirred up a bloody persecution. From six to seven hundred new converts, amongst them the King's own son, joyfully laid down their lives for their faith. Nothing was able to stem the victorious course of Christianity. As soon as he had converted any country, and taken measures for the preservation of the faith there, Francis hastened on to other lands. His zeal led him from Farther India to the Peninsula of Malacca, and thence to the territory of Macassar and to the Moluccas, scattering everywhere the seed of the Gospel, which brought forth fruit an hundredfold. He was not to be deterred from visiting the island of Maurica, by the accounts which were given of the treachery and cruelty of its inhabitants. These were represented to him in the darkest colours. They poisoned strangers, he was told, and fed on human flesh, devouring even their own parents when weakened by age. To all this Francis replied: "If gold and precious stones were to be had there, many would be found willing to run the risk; and shall I draw back through fear when there are immortal souls to be saved?" These

savage men too, were attracted by the heavenly mildness of the saint, and recognised him as a messenger from God. He had much to suffer on this barren island; but his soul was continually overwhelmed by the purest spiritual consolation, insomuch that in a letter to Europe he says that there, where he was in want of everything, his tears of joy were so incessant as to make him nearly lose his eyesight. God crowned his labours with wonderful success, for Tolo, the capital of the island, a city of twenty-five thousand inhabitants, became entirely Christian. A new aim now presented itself to Francis, and attracted him irresistibly forwards. He had obtained knowledge of Japan, that great island-kingdom on the east coast of Asia; and it grieved him deeply to think of this great people, so richly gifted by nature, being still oppressed under the yoke of Satan, and misled by its idolatrous priests or Bonzes. Accompanied by a Japanese of high rank, whom he had already converted, and two companions of his order, he set sail, and landed in the Japanese port of Cagoxima in 1549. The viceroy of the province showed himself very favourable, and allowed the preaching of the Gospel, but the Bonzes soon raised a great commotion. Instead however, of drawing back, Francis pushed his way into the interior, and everywhere founded Christian communities. Even the corrupted city of Amanguchi could not continue to withstand the power of his preaching. He wrote from thence, full of astonishment at this victory: "Never in my life have I felt such consolation. I saw the pride of the Bonzes humbled, and the bitterest foes of the Christian name subjected to the obedience of faith in humility." The fame of "the great Bonze of the West" reached the ears of the King of Boungo, who invited him on a visit to his court. For the honour of religion, the Portuguese escorted him with all magnificence to the royal presence. The King received him as an equal, and heard with great astonishment the teaching of Christianity, which he confessed was in the highest degree conformable to reason. The people came in crowds, notwithstanding the rage of the Bonzes. The whole day Francis had to preach, instruct, and answer the acute objections of his hearers. A celebrated Bonze once challenged him to a public disputation, and the saint succeeded in so thoroughly convincing this learned heathen of the reality of the Christian truths, that he fell on his knees, with his hands held up to heaven, and cried with tears: "O Jesus Christ! eternal and true Son of God, I yield myself up to Thee; and confess with heart and lips that Thou art the Almighty God from all eternity." He then begged pardon of those present for having hitherto taught them lies. Xavier founded many Christian communities in this great kingdom. The new Church of Japan grew up into vigorous life, and its subsequent

history has shown that it was not built upon sand, but on the immovable rock of faith.

St. Francis Xavier did such great things because the hand of the Lord was visibly with him. As in the days of the apostles, God confirmed the preaching of His servant by the most wonderful miracles. The same miracle which had occurred at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, was often repeated in the course of this saint's preaching; he spoke languages fluently which he had never learnt; and at times when he was speaking in one language to a crowd of hearers of different nations, all thought they had heard their own tongue spoken. Innumerable conversions were wrought by the miracles of healing, worked by Francis upon the sick. He reaped a rich harvest during the time of a great pestilence. All who suffered themselves to be baptized, and called with faith upon the name of Jesus, were healed. But most astounding of all was the way in which God raised the dead at his prayer. In order to win to the faith the obstinate inhabitants of a village in Travancore, he ordered the grave of a man who had been buried the day before to be opened. The saint knelt down beside the corpse, in which decomposition had already set in, and after a short prayer commanded the dead man to stand up in the name of the living God. He arose at once, strong and well, and all the spectators, struck with terror, desired to be baptized. Not less wonderful is the restoration of a child of five years old, the son of a Mahometan, which fell overboard during the last sea-voyage of the great apostle. On seeing the agony of the poor father, Francis recollected himself for a moment, and then turning, asked him, "Dost thou promise me, if God should give thee back thy son, to believe in Jesus, and to become a true Christian?" The Mahometan promised, and three days after its loss the child was found, just before sunrise, safe on the ship's deck.

After having, as his biographer Bonhours relates, preached the Gospel over an extent of three thousand leagues, converted fifty-two kingdoms and tribes, and baptized a multitude of heathens, he next desired to bear the light of faith into the immense empire of China. His heart embraced the whole world; no scheme for the promotion of God's glory seemed to him too great or comprehensive. He had already reached the rocky island of San Chan, opposite the coast of China, and unheeding the dangers that attended it, was making arrangements for his crossing, when a burning fever laid him on his deathbed. Forsaken by all, he lay on a little straw in an open hut, exposed to wind and rain. But a sweet peace beamed from his countenance; and, continually invoking the Most Holy Trinity and the Queen of Heaven, whom he had ever loved so tenderly, he breathed his last, December 2, 1552. The holy body was covered

with quicklime, but when removed more than two months afterwards, it was found fresh, supple, and diffusing a heavenly perfume. Even after a lapse of two hundred years, it was found to be yet entirely incorrupt. Having carefully investigated his life, virtues, and miracles, the Church solemnly enrolled the name of Francis Xavier among the saints, giving him the glorious title of "The Apostle of India and Japan." The very heathen paid honour to his memory ; and Protestants have called him another Paul, and lamented that he should not have been one of themselves.

"After the death of St. Francis Xavier, other missionaries carried on the good work, and bore the name of Jesus into the vast, distant, and hitherto inaccessible empire of China."

A long succession of heroic missionaries, in whom the spirit of St. Francis Xavier lived again, continued the work which he had begun. If we look towards India, we see such men as Robert de Nobili, a near kinsman of Pope Marcellus II., and Blessed John de Britto, son of the viceroy of Brazil, who, despising all prospects of earthly greatness, devoted their lives amid toil and danger to the conversion of the heathen. In India it appeared a thing almost impossible to convert even one of the Brahmins or native priests. Priding themselves on their caste and on their reputed wisdom, they would hold intercourse with none except such as were Brahmins like themselves ; and appeared quite beyond the reach of the grace of Christianity. It was to the conversion of this class of men, however, that Robert de Nobili determined to devote his life. Like St. Paul, who became "all things to all men to win all to Christ," he adopted a manner of life which, while it gained him the greatest admiration in the eyes of the Brahmins, imposed on him incredible privations. Through the unsurpassed example of a life of the strictest penance, and the heroic perseverance of forty-five years, he converted many of the chief and most learned among the Brahmins, and himself baptized above one hundred thousand heathen. John de Britto often baptized five hundred in one day, sometimes one thousand, and once, as his companion deposed on oath, three thousand. The miraculous cures wrought by himself, and even by the new

converts, were so numerous that the people became accustomed to them; and that they might not be forced to accept the truths of Christianity, they ascribed them, as in the times of the first apostles, to some unknown magical arts. This was the case of a persecuting ruler who was cruelly torturing the missionary and one of his disciples. In the course of the torture one of the eyes of the latter was forced out of its socket. The persecutor bade him, in mockery, apply to his master for help. The saint made the sign of the cross over the eyeball, and it at once returned to its place. The astonishment of the heathen governor was at its height when the confessor read with the injured eye; but, instead of acknowledging the divine might of Christianity, he abused what he called the magic powers of its professors. John de Britto closed his great apostolate by a glorious martyrdom in 1693, and is now among the number of those whose beatification the Church has pronounced. Under the care of such missionaries, Christianity made so much progress that even Protestant writers have been forced to acknowledge that all India would have become Christian, if the missionaries had been able to continue their work. About the middle of the eighteenth century however, a severe blow was dealt to these missions by the enemies of religion. The Portuguese minister, the Marquis de Pombal, procured the expulsion of the missionaries of the Society of Jesus; and a hundred and twenty-nine of them were crowded together in a ship and sent to Lisbon, where they were thrown into a horrible prison. Thus for sixty years the Christians of the once flourishing Church of India were left, as it were, orphans. But the vitality of this Church was most wonderfully proved; for when, in 1820, new missionaries went out and trod the soil hallowed by the blood and the labours of so many apostles, they found there over a million Christians who had preserved their faith under the hardest trials.

The conversion of China was still more difficult than that of India or Japan. This vast empire, which contains above three hundred million inhabitants, in the sixteenth century

was lying in the deepest night of superstition and idolatry. The country however, had been by no means left during so many centuries entirely deprived of the divine light of faith. According to an old but unauthenticated tradition, St. Thomas had penetrated into China, and it is at any rate certain that at a later period the Christian faith had been, not only preached, but had many adherents. According to an inscription discovered at Sianfoo in 1625, the genuineness of which is now not doubted, Christianity was flourishing in China as early as the seventh and eighth centuries. Later, in the Middle Ages, as we have already related (p. 412), God showed His mercy to this country by allowing missionaries to preach the Gospel there. Peking, the capital, was the residence of an archbishop, who had four suffragans under him. But the good seed, however, was choked. When the Portuguese landed on the Chinese coast in 1517, they persisted, in spite of the most determined opposition, in trying to force their way into the interior. The pride and jealousy of the Chinese were roused in consequence, and they closed the country to foreigners and forbade all communication with them. The one thing which gave some hope of better fortune to the missionaries was the high honour in which mechanical arts and the mathematical sciences were held by the Chinese. It was by means of these, indeed, that the celebrated Father Matthew Ricci succeeded, in 1583, in obtaining an entrance into the country. After indescribable labours and struggles, he at last penetrated to Peking. By means of suitable presents, and, above all, by his profound learning and rare prudence, he won the favour of the Emperor, who placed an image of Jesus Christ in the most splendid hall of his palace. A great road was now opened for the victory of the Christian religion. Men high in office, and three princes even of the imperial family, became Christians. For twenty-seven years Ricci laboured untiringly in the court, whilst his companions preached in Peking and in the provinces with great success. At his death, in 1610, he left above three hundred churches. Calumnies were however

circulated, which placed the faith in great danger, and Father Adam Schall was sent out from Cologne. Through his knowledge of mathematics and his skill in various arts, he won a high place in the Emperor's favour; and when, in 1644, the Tartars conquered China, the young ruler of the new dynasty promoted him to the rank of chief mandarin in the mathematical college, and himself often visited him and treated him as a friend and father. A great impulse was thus given to the progress of Christianity. A large and splendid church was built in Peking itself. In 1651 there were more than one hundred and fifty thousand Christians; the number became doubled during the next twelve years, and the Emperor's mother, his principal wife, and his eldest son received baptism. But Schall's life was not destined to close in the midst of exterior prosperity. A frightful persecution arose during the minority of the Emperor Cang-hi, and Adam, then in his seventy-fifth year, was thrown into prison, and died from the effects of his sufferings in 1666. A new period of triumph was inaugurated by Father Ferdinand Verbiest, the successor of Father Schall. In 1671 he succeeded in obtaining from Cang-hi toleration for his brethren, and in that year alone more than twenty thousand Chinese were converted. The next year an uncle of the Emperor's, one of his chief generals, and many other persons of distinction were baptized. The Emperor always took one or more missionaries with him on his journeys and treated them as members of his own family. But hard trials awaited the Chinese Church, as we shall see.

"How thorough had been the conversion of the heathen is shown by their conduct during the persecution in Japan. Over one million died for their faith, many under horrible torments. Tender children, feeble old men, and noble ladies, hastened joyfully, in their best attire, as to a marriage feast, to martyrdom in its most cruel form. To this day the hatred of Christianity still survives in Japan."

Christianity flourished still more gloriously in Japan after the death of St. Francis Xavier. Christian communities arose in all parts of the empire; churches and schools were built everywhere, even in the imperial city of Meaco. The kings of

Boungo, Arima, and Omura embraced Christianity with all their subjects, and in 1582 despatched an embassy, consisting of their nearest relations, to Pope Gregory XIII., which was received with great ceremony in Rome. There were then in Japan over two hundred thousand Christians of all classes, two hundred and fifty churches, and many colleges for the education of priests, and hopes were entertained of the complete conversion of the country. Suddenly however, the persecution broke out, which raged almost without intermission for more than half a century. The Emperor, Taicosama, had at first showed himself favourable to the Christians; but he became enraged against them, partly owing to the determined refusal of some Christian virgins to swell the number of his wives, and partly to the inflammatory discourses of the Bonzes, who represented the Christians as contemnners of the laws and foes of the state. In consequence he ordered that all the missionaries should be banished, and that all Christians who would not deny their faith should be burned or otherwise put to death. Ukondono, the Emperor's Christian minister, who preferred banishment or death to the denial of his faith, was deprived of all his property, and sent forth to a life of poverty and misery with his wife and children and his aged father. His friends begged him with tears, to conceal his faith only for a little while until the Emperor's rage should have passed off. Nothing however, would induce him to yield; but he rather rejoiced with all his family that they should have the opportunity of thus bearing suffering for Christ. After this the Emperor's anger grew somewhat abated, but only to flame up again more fearfully later on.

On the 5th of February 1597 twenty-six crosses were to be seen erected on the hill opposite the port of Nagasaki, to each of which a Christian confessor was fastened, who had been at the Emperor's command sentenced to death. There were weak young boys amongst them, but all died, their faces beaming with joy, and giving thanks aloud to God. At the Pentecost of 1862 they were solemnly canonised by the Church.

The persecution raged still more fiercely under Daifusama,

Taicosama's successor; and of the three following emperors, each seemed desirous of eclipsing his predecessor in cruelty. A great part of the guilt of this long and frightful persecution rests with the English and Dutch Calvinists, who, out of commercial jealousy and hatred of the Catholic faith, persuaded the Emperor that the King of Spain desired to obtain possession of Japan, and to prepare the way for doing so was sending the Jesuits there to Christianise it. During the persecution they also did the government the service of apprising it of the arrival of missionaries, and of where they were to be found. In spite of the persecution however, Christianity yet continued for a time to make some progress. Between the death of Taicosama in 1598, and the year 1614, more than a hundred thousand Japanese were baptized; and even later, while the persecution raged with increasing violence, native baptisms numbered some thousands annually. But the bloody edicts were executed with merciless severity; whole crowds of Christians were often slain at one time; the faith was forced to succumb, and it was supposed that towards the middle of the seventeenth century it had been entirely exterminated. All entrance into the empire was forbidden under pain of death, excepting to the Dutch and Chinese. At every seaport a crucifix was fastened to the ground to be trodden under foot by all who landed, a condition to which the Dutch submitted. It is only quite recently, that, under the protection of the French consul, some missionaries have again come to reside in Nagasaki, where a fine church was built in 1865 in honour of the twenty-six Japanese martyrs. These missionaries have lately announced to Europe the surprising intelligence that there are still to be found in the interior of Japan whole districts inhabited by Catholic Christians, who, instructed until now by catechists only, have preserved their faith pure and unadulterated. The Holy Father, we are told, was moved even to tears on hearing this, and resolved immediately to take measures for extending his paternal care to these his unknown children.

We must yet linger a little over the history of the Japanese

persecution and the great examples of Christian heroism which it called forth. More than one million Christians stood the hardest trials to which their faith could be subjected. When the more ordinary tortures—tearing of flesh, dislocation of limbs, burning, and so forth—proved ineffectual, either to force the Christians to apostatise, or to prevent fresh conversions, new ones, till then unheard of, were employed. The confessors were fastened to ropes and lowered, head downwards, into a deep ditch, partly filled with horrible filth, and closely covered in above. The unbearable stench, the pressure of blood on the brain, with the nervous torture and painful twitching of the muscles that soon set in, caused a frightful death-agony, which often lasted from eight to ten days. Another form of torture was furnished by what was called the “Abyss of Hell.” Out of the crater of a certain volcano, volumes of hot, sulphurous, and fetid gas were continually given forth; into this the Christians were lowered till almost choked, and then hot sulphurous water was flung over them. After this torture had been repeated for fourteen days, they were either thrown down the burning crater, or else were left to die exposed in the open air, their bodies covered with worms and ulcers. But the more horrible the torments devised by the persecutors, the more wonderful seemed the courage and joy with which the martyrs endured them. A few—comparatively speaking, very few—apostatized; but with these exceptions, all the Christians, men and women, children and old people alike, bore bravely, patiently, and gladly the most fearful sufferings.

In astonishment at the wonderful spectacle which this Christian persecution offers, a Protestant author of our own times writes: “The earliest records of the Church offer no example of more indomitable heroism than is furnished by the history of the tortures to which the Japanese of all classes were subjected in the day of trial.”¹ The Christians

¹ See Marshall's “Christian Missions,” vol. i. p. 414. Mayence, 1863. (German translation.)

might be torn asunder, dismembered, crushed, or roasted over slow fires; mothers might be burned with all their children; a father might see his sons slain one by one, and then himself and his wife led forth to death; but stronger than all was faith and the wonderful grace of God. Here one would be seen going to execution preaching, singing, and rejoicing; there, others would be doing the same from the cross or the midst of the fire. Mothers counted themselves happy to die with their children in their arms or at their sides, and the children bore the most fearful tortures without one sign of pain. How powerfully was God's grace shown forth in a company of fifty weak Christians, mostly mothers with their children, who were all together hurried off to the place of execution! As they went they sang, "Blessed be Jesus, blessed be our Saviour; we die for Him!" And even on the cross they continued to give glory to God as rapturously as though they were already standing white-robed before the throne of the Lamb. (For other instances, see vol. i. p. 196, and vol. iv. p. 225 or 227.) Everywhere companies of the faithful stood forth, encouraging each other in constancy and strengthening each other in death. When martyrs were going to execution, troops of Christians accompanied them as though to triumph, praising God. Whilst so many Christians gave themselves up unresistingly to death, those of Arima, who numbered thirty-seven thousand, believed that they might save themselves from wholesale destruction by taking refuge in the old fortified town of Simabara. But Kökebakker, a Dutchman, demolished the walls with the guns of his ship, and thus enabled the persecutors to put to death thirty-seven thousand Christians in one day. The inscription on their grave may yet be seen. "So long," it runs, "as the sun warms the earth, let no Christian dare to enter Japan. Let it be hereby made known to all: That the King of Spain, the God of the Christians, and even the great God of all Himself, shall pay for it with his head if he disobeys this command."¹

¹ Historische politische Blätter, Jahrgang, 1863, vol. ii. pp. 239, 252.

The Chinese Christians showed themselves in no way inferior to the Japanese in heroism and constancy, when, in 1722, the persecution broke out under the Emperor Yeng-Thing. The missionaries were all simultaneously driven from their posts, more than three hundred churches were destroyed or turned to secular uses, and above three hundred thousand Christians delivered over to the fury of the unbelievers. But rich and poor, men, women, and children, vied with one another in the joyful confession of their faith. Among the first victims were some of the nearest relations of the Emperor, who had been brought up in all the splendour of the Chinese court, and whom hitherto the highest officers of state had approached only on their knees. These unanimously refused to conform, even outwardly, to the religion of the state, and the whole family, including all the brothers of the Emperor, and even the heir-presumptive to the throne, were attainted and sent into miserable exile. There, in a desert region of Tartary, they displayed, during many years of bitter poverty, suffering, and privation, such a patience and magnanimity that many of the still heathen members of the imperial family, undeterred by the prospect of a like fate, embraced the Christian religion. Prince John wrote from his place of banishment to his friend and spiritual guide, Father Parenin: "Our desire is only that we may amend our faults, practise virtue, conform ourselves to the will of God, and persevere to the end in His holy service. Pray that we may do this. For the rest we want nothing." When the servant of one of the other princes wept on seeing his master loaded with chains, the latter said to him, "What! you are a Christian, and yet do not know the value of sufferings! They are the pledges of a blessed eternity. Do not lose courage, but remain steadfast in the faith, and never forsake God's service let it cost you what it may." The same prince, when another servant wished to place linen on the wounds caused by the rubbing of his heavy chains, prevented him, saying, "Did you ever hear that our Lord during the night of His passion tried to loosen the cords that bound Him, or to put bandages beneath them, to make them hurt the less?"

Concerning the sufferings of the imperial princesses, Father Parenin, their director, writes that it would have been impossible to imagine a more terrible trial, or one borne with greater Christian magnanimity. "Those who had hitherto lived in splendour and luxury, now fallen into the deepest poverty, without maintenance from their husbands, without relations to stand by them, or friends to comfort them; having ever before them the spectacle of their sons in chains and condemned to death, and of the fate yet worse than death, of their still more unhappy daughters; deprived, moreover, of their one consolation, the reception of the Blessed Sacra-

ment. To support such sorrow, and amidst such a sea of troubles to utter no word of complaint—where, even during the first ages of the Church, shall we find conduct more admirable, more heroic? Enraged that many years of such trials and sufferings were not enough to subdue the courage of the confessors, the Emperor gave orders that they should be imprisoned in small dungeons or pits, six feet long and ten feet wide, into which necessary food was passed through a narrow opening. Here they died one after another, until, in 1735, those who still survived were set free amidst the rejoicings of the people. Christians of all ranks were animated by a like patience and joy in suffering. In many provinces the same family would be often found to furnish three generations of martyrs.

During the great persecution which was renewed in 1736 by the Emperor Kien-Long, all, with very few exceptions, displayed heroic courage amidst the most cruel torments. The faces of the martyrs were beaten till they were covered with blood, they were laid on the ground and scourged with whips and rods, but in vain; they only answered, "We will live and die Christians." "You need not fear my moving," one man said as the executioner was binding him before the torture began; "a Christian is only too happy to suffer for his faith." During all the time that the executioners were doing their work, the mother of this sufferer stood unflinchingly at his side, and when she saw him maimed and covered with blood, embraced him tenderly, saying, "Ah! let us hasten to thank God for the mercy He has shown thee!" A Christian physician had been beaten nearly to death, when a young lad whom he had taken care of since his baptism, desired to take his place. "Why, my son," asked the martyr, "would you wish to rob me of the crown which God has prepared for me?" Numberless other examples of like triumphs of faith might be brought forward. From the year 1722, till quite recent times, conversion has always been attended with risk of life. But in spite of the long persecution of one hundred and forty years, Christians have become continually more numerous, and at the present time there are three times as many as when the trial first began.

"In the newly discovered continent of America too, the Gospel was spread abroad; driving before it the strangest idolatries with all their crimes and infamies. With no people on earth were human sacrifices so frequent as with the aborigines of America. Twenty thousand were offered yearly in Mexico, and if no prisoners of war were to be had for the purpose, native Mexicans were sacrificed instead. The sufferings and dangers which the heroic missionaries had to encounter among these fierce cannibal races, cannot be described. They had to contend not

only with the cruelty and vice of the natives, but with the insatiable avarice of the European adventurers. But the toilsome work progressed, and here too the faith was firmly planted."

Whilst the heroic apostles of the faith were labouring with such success in the far East, others had carried the seed of the Gospel to the West, and were reaping a glorious harvest. The discovery of the New World opened a vast field to missionary zeal. Innumerable tribes inhabited those immense regions, and all were languishing in the deepest spiritual destitution. Some races, indeed, were to be found, whose character was gentle and noble; some, too, who were far advanced in knowledge and the arts, and who were able to build splendid palaces and temples; but everywhere there was a deplorable degradation of morals. For the most part the aborigines of America were sunk in an almost brutal barbarism; many men, indeed, refused to recognise and treat them as human beings; and it was on this account that they were declared expressly, in a bull published by Pope Paul III. in 1537, to be "true men, who were to remain unmolested in their liberty and property, and whom it was unlawful to make into slaves." They had for ages been accustomed only to obey their lower instincts and passions, and the habits so formed had become a second nature and exercised undisputed sway over them. Hunger only could force them to exertion, and when a store of food had been obtained by hunting or by a predatory excursion, they abandoned themselves to a life of sloth. The accounts given of their barbarous customs are terrible. In battle they tore one another to pieces, and eagerly devoured the flesh of the slain, and even of their own aged parents. With many nations the chief held it a point of honour to maintain a great number of wives. Montezuma, the Emperor of Mexico, besides the two empresses, his wives, had two thousand concubines.

It almost seemed as though Satan, the enemy of mankind, had really set his throne amongst these unhappy people and received from them idolatrous homage. In Mexico, where

the religious rites were more cruel than anywhere else, there were two thousand different idols. The principal deity possessed a temple of enormous size. The altar of sacrifice was near the summit of a great pyramid, round which were heaped piles of human skulls. Here the idol, a frightful monster, was enthroned, in whose honour human sacrifices were offered. The unhappy victim was dragged by five priests up the altar steps, his body was opened and the heart torn out. Still palpitating, it was then held up towards the sun and afterwards smeared over the face of the idol. The body was thrown to the ground and made ready for the feast. In this savage manner twenty thousand men, mostly prisoners, but often even native Mexicans, were yearly sacrificed. A miracle of grace indeed was needed to conquer such savage barbarity, and transform into lamb-like gentleness the fierceness of these tiger souls.

True it is that human sacrifices were not so frequent with other races as with the Mexicans, but the same fierceness of nature was everywhere to be met with, the same blunted perceptions and dulness of spirit, forming an almost impenetrable barrier to the entrance of Christian civilisation. Did a missionary succeed after indescribable toil in collecting some Indians around him, and by combating their vices endeavour to lead them to a Christian life, it often happened that they would rebel against the yoke thus imposed, rise against their spiritual father, murder him, and return to their wild and wandering life. And although some tribes indeed showed themselves more gentle and tractable, yet for this very reason a fresh difficulty here beset the missionaries in their work. It was from the European settlers that this new and almost unconquerable hindrance came. Blinded by avarice to higher interests, the only desire of many of these was to enrich themselves at the expense of the unfortunate natives. The latter were forced with merciless cruelty to the performance of heavy tasks; and their masters, instead of treating them, as was the intention of the Spanish Government, with Christian love, and instructing them in the

Catholic faith, converted their servitude into an unendurable slavery. This hard oppression, together with the scandalous lives of many of the colonists, bred in the minds of the natives a feeling of intense bitterness and dislike towards Europeans, and opposed almost insurmountable obstacles in the way of the missionaries.

Great however, as were the difficulties that beset the work of conversion in the New World, and powerful as were the efforts of Satan to retain its unhappy inhabitants in his bondage, the divine decree had nevertheless gone forth for their redemption. So soon as the Church became aware of their wretchedness, she hastened to take measures for their relief, sending forth her servants to deliver them from the slavery of the devil, and to bestow on them the freedom of God's children. She also took the part of the oppressed against their oppressors. The Holy Father repeatedly raised his voice in their behalf, and denounced as a contrivance of Satan the enslaving of the native races. At the same time God awoke in many hearts an astonishing zeal in behalf of the Indian missions. Most especially moving is the self-devotion with which Las Casas, a Dominican monk, who was afterwards made bishop, gave himself up to the cause of the distressed children of the soil. Twelve times he crossed the sea to demand that justice might be done them. His whole life was consecrated to their salvation. His nights were spent in prayer, and his days in seeking out the Indians among the caves and forests, and instructing them in the Christian faith; and when ninety years old he wrote a book in their defence.

Protestants even, are forced to recognise and admire the self-sacrificing zeal of the Catholic missionaries. "Nothing," writes one of them, "does more honour to the Spanish missionaries than the unwearied energy with which they constantly defended the weak flocks intrusted to them; they were the servants of peace, and strove to the utmost to wrest the scourge from the hands of the oppressors."¹

¹ Robertson, "History of the Discovery of America," vol. iv.

The toils of the missionaries were most gloriously crowned with success. In Mexico alone, from 1524 to 1540, the Dominicans and Franciscans baptized six million natives. Forty years after the first coming of the Spaniards, there was an archbishopric there with six bishoprics and many hundred religious houses. A hundred years after the conquest, the capital alone possessed fifty convents and parish churches, some of extreme magnificence, and gained the honourable name of the "Rome of America."

The labours of the Brazilian missionaries were equally fruitful. Here too, it was necessary so to speak, that the natives should first become men before they could become Christians. The missionaries braved every toil and danger in their efforts to root out the shameful custom of cannibalism. They would tear the bloody corpse from those who were going to devour it, and would inflict the severest penances upon themselves, in presence of the natives, in expiation of such crimes. In this manner the savage nature was gradually softened, and a horror of the practice implanted.

Barefooted, with his crucifix and rosary round his neck, and his breviary in his hand, Joseph of Anchieta, the great apostle of Brazil, traversed that vast country with no protection but that of Divine Providence. In search of his savage children, he wandered through dark forests, swam strong streams, and climbed high mountains, encountering fearlessly savage beasts and poisonous snakes. On catching sight of one of the natives he would quicken his steps, and, when close, would stretch out his arms towards him, and lovingly strive to draw him beneath the shadow of the cross. If the wild men refused to listen to his words, he would often throw himself weeping at their feet, becoming all things to them if only he might win their souls to Christ.

Anchieta laboured thus for forty-four years. (For an account of his wonderful miracles, see vol. ii. p. 447.) Next to God's accompanying grace, it is to such zeal as his that the marvellous growth of Christianity in Brazil is mainly owing. According to the testimony of a Protestant writer, the Catholic missionaries had succeeded in fifty years' time, and over a space of more than two thousand miles, in gathering the coast races into villages, whose inhabitants led the most perfectly well-ordered lives. Their days were divided between work, instruction, and devotion; gluttony and drunkenness and excess had disappeared; and nothing was to be seen but the most stirring example of industry, virtue, and piety. From 1589 to 1610, the western side of South America was rendered glorious by the life and work of St. Francis of Solano, of the Franciscan order. Not content with the rich spiritual harvests he had reaped in Peru, and which had procured him the title of its apostle, he next hastened to the aid of the missionaries in the more southern provinces.

Once several wild tribes, banding together, attacked the Christian territory. The apostle went forth fearlessly to meet them, and though he spoke in a strange tongue, his words were understood by all. Through a miracle of grace their savage fury was suddenly calmed, and approaching him with reverence, they asked for baptism. God richly endowed him with the gift of miracles, insomuch that he not only healed the sick, but raised the dead to life, was carried over rapid rivers on his mantle, and by his prayers caused fresh springs of water to flow forth in barren places.

New Granada, where an archbishopric was erected in 1564, possessed in St. Louis Bertrand a great and miraculously gifted apostle; and there too at a later period (from 1615 to 1654) blessed Peter Claver set an example of the most perfect self-devotion in behalf of suffering humanity. He had bound himself by a vow to consecrate his whole life to the bodily and spiritual well-being of the poor negro slaves, and for this end made himself like one of them. (Vol. ii. p. 3 or 92.) According to his own testimony, he baptized at the very least three hundred thousand, of these the most forsaken of mankind. In other places too, especially in the Antilles, so many negroes were converted to Christianity that it was said that Providence had permitted their transportation from their own land that they might be made sharers in the liberty of the children of God. Thus no class of men in South America was excluded from the blessings of grace; and, as the Protestant historian Ranke remarks, at the beginning of the seventeenth century the stately fabric of the Catholic Church was to be found there in its full development. There were there five archbishoprics, twenty-seven bishoprics, four hundred religious houses, and innumerable parish churches. Well might it be said, "Behold, all things are become new"! Throughout the immense tracts of land which a hundred years before had been tenanted by savages who seemed to possess nothing but the outward form of humanity, civilised beings were now to be met with, Catholic Christians, whose lives were examples of order and piety. It was not in Christianity alone either, that the missionaries instructed them; they taught them also to read and write, to sow and reap, to plant trees and build houses. To quote Ranke again, "The work performed by the Catholic Church in these countries, was in truth, a great one." Whilst such prosperity was attending the South American missions, the missionaries in the northern half of the great continent were gaining glorious victories over the barbarism and idolatry of the inhabitants. In Canada especially, the apostles of the faith had the support of numerous convents of nuns. With regard to these an English Protestant speaks feelingly of their self-sacrificing charity. "The early history of Canada," he says, "is filled with examples of the purest religious zeal and

heroism, given by young and tender women, who had renounced all the comforts of civilisation in order that they might perform the meanest services for the sick, and impart the blessings of religious teaching to the benighted and wondering savages."

The mission to the Hurons was an especially dangerous one. Many of the missionaries engaged in it were tortured and mutilated in the most frightful manner. But with all the greater zeal, others pressed on to fill their places, and by the middle of the seventeenth century the whole tribe of the Huron Indians was already Christian. It was the mission to the Iroquois, however, the most savage and bloodthirsty of all the native races, that was beset with the greatest difficulties. In March 1649 Fathers John de Brebeuf, and Gabriel Lallemant, attained the crown of martyrdom at their hands. The former they tied to a post, cut off his upper lip and his nose, fixed lighted torches to all parts of his body, burned his gums, thrust a red-hot iron into his throat, and at last skinned him while still living. The sufferings which Father Gabriel Lallemant underwent were, if possible, more frightful still. He was roasted over a slow fire made of bark; boiling water was poured over his head in mockery of baptism; one of his eyes was torn out and a burning coal placed in the socket. It was only after seventy-six hours of horrible tortures that the sacrifice was at length completed. Before this time the heroic Father Isaac Fomes had already been killed by the Iroquois with similar torments, and others followed who likewise suffered martyrdom. But at length these fierce savages began to prize and love the Christian religion, and the treasures of divine grace began quickly to be revealed among them. An Iroquois maiden, Catharine Tegakkonita, whose life was a wonder of purity and mortification, died in the odour of sanctity; and many others of the Iroquois of both sexes suffered martyrdom with marvellous patience and constancy.

The aspect of Indian convert communities was edifying in the extreme. Speaking of one of them, the Bishop of Quebec said in 1688, "So orderly is the daily life of this village that one might take it for that of a convent;" and, according to the testimony of the distinguished writer Charlevoix, "these Indian Christians would have done honour by their piety to the first ages of the Church." There can be no reasonable doubt that all the North American native tribes would have become Christian, had not it been that the English Calvinists here, like the Dutch Calvinists in Japan, set themselves to oppose the Catholic missionaries. In the year 1700 leave was granted by the English Government that all Catholic priests who entered the province should be hanged. And large sums were placed by the English magistrates on the heads of the missionaries. A thousand pounds (about 6600 thalers) was

publicly offered for the head of the excellent Father Rasles, who had devoted himself for thirty-seven years, amidst great poverty and suffering, to the salvation of the Indians ; but nobody being found to betray him, the village where he was staying was attacked and he was cruelly murdered.

“The missions of Paraguay in South America were especially flourishing. Out of wild tribes living with beasts in the forests, their thoughts running only on rapine, murder, and revenge, filled with an unnatural craving after human flesh, and knowing no enjoyments beyond the lowest pleasures of sense, the unwearied perseverance of God’s priests had formed model Christian communities, in which innocence of life and piety and charity beyond all belief were to be found, and which by degrees transformed what had been before a wilderness into a paradise.”

The beautiful Christian communities which were formed in the fruitful valleys of the Uruguay and Paraguay rivers, are the glory of Catholic missions. Speaking of them, a good bishop writes in 1730 to Pope Clement XII.: “Here we find reproduced the piety almost of the early Christians, with God’s temples and service in their full beauty ; to the shame of other Christians, the wonder of the savages, the admiration of nature, the triumph of grace, and the victory of Christ’s Cross.” It was in the latter half of the sixteenth century that the missionaries from Peru and Brazil began the work of conversion in these regions. The difficulties which they encountered were enormous. They had to cross rivers, lakes, and swamps, in order to penetrate to the haunts of the natives ; and when they had found those whom they sought, it was only at the peril of their lives that they could approach and hold intercourse with them. They then had to win their confidence, and to this end left no means untried that ingenious charity could suggest. Next, it was necessary to moderate their love of a free and roving life, to restrain the cruelty of their nature, to break them off their habits of idleness and vice, and lastly, to instruct them and form them into virtuous Christians and civilised men. To effect this, besides God’s grace—without which no such

change can be wrought—there was required on the part of the missionaries the most absolute and self-sacrificing charity, and an heroic patience and fortitude. And it was these virtues that gained so glorious a victory over the not unsusceptible hearts of the savages. On one occasion a pestilence broke out among a tribe of heathen, and Father Francisco Diaz, one of the missionaries, devoted himself entirely to the care of the sick, and so won them to the Christian faith, through an example of the most generous charity. During this time they were suddenly attacked by enemies, who took the healthy ones prisoners and devoured their flesh, especially that of children, whom they cut in pieces before their mothers' eyes. The missionary himself was only saved by the timely warning of an Indian. On the news of the attack, the neighbouring Christians hastened to the rescue, overpowered the murderers, and took many of them prisoners. These prisoners, the victors desired might be hanged, in punishment of their crimes and as a warning to others. Father Diaz, however, calmed their anger, and interceded for the criminals, who were delivered into his power. He treated them with the utmost kindness, instructed them in the faith, and then gave them their freedom. Through his prudence and charity these men became the apostles of their own tribe, which they led to their deliverer to be instructed and baptized. Father Diaz received them with joy, and distributed them among the "Reductions" as the organised Christian communities were called.

At the earnest request of the missionaries, the King of Spain, in order to protect the new converts from the bad example of European adventurers, forbade his subjects to settle in the Reductions, or even to enter them without permission. And it is to this that the perfection with which the Christian life was developed and maintained there is to be specially attributed. Each of these communities formed one large family, the entire direction of which, both in temporal and spiritual affairs, was intrusted to one or two of the missionaries. Collectively they formed a Christian state, under the protection

of the King of Spain, the equal of which the world has never seen, and scarcely even imagined. In the midst of each of these villages, of from four to six thousand inhabitants, rose the church, large enough to hold all the people, and decorated according as their means allowed. Beside the church stood the public buildings,—the mission-house, the granary, the lodgings for strangers, and the arsenal after the use of fire-arms had become permitted to the natives for defence against external enemies. Round these, the one-storied stone houses of the Christian families were grouped in the form of a square; a large piece of land was fenced off from the ground belonging to the village, which was called “God’s field,” and cultivated in common. Its produce was applied to the payment of taxes, the maintenance of divine worship, and the support of widows, and orphans, and the old and infirm. The rest of the ground was divided among different families and cultivated by them. Those who were idle were forced to till a larger portion of “God’s field.” The crops raised on the little farms were collected in great storehouses, and provisions distributed on certain days of the week. Every Monday the women and girls received wool, cotton, and silk, and brought back what they had spun on Saturday. Suitable workshops for the different trades were erected, where those capable of learning, received instruction and employment. These people, who till lately had been familiar only with the use of the bow and club, now not only understood the more ordinary trades, but had among them skilled carvers, painters, and gilders; they cast bells, built organs, were able to make and play upon all the European musical instruments in a masterly style, and to imitate most closely the finest pieces of mechanism. The day’s work began with singing and prayer in common, and with the holy sacrifice of the mass, from which none might absent themselves without good reason; and closed again with prayer and singing, for which all met together in the church; and the church bells announced the different hours and their employments. The happy inhabitants of these Reductions knew neither want

nor needless requirements, and the life they led was child-like in its innocence. Don Pedro Taxardo, the Bishop of Buenos-Ayres, who had often visited these villages, had no hesitation in writing to the King of Spain, that "in these Indian settlements such great innocence prevailed, that he did not believe one single mortal sin was committed amongst them in a year." These pure souls, their history further tells us, hungered after the Bread of Angels; almost all received holy communion every month, many every week, and some even oftener. Thus they acquired great purity of soul, and such tenderness of conscience, that they would often burst into sobs when the missionary concluded his instruction with the act of contrition, and laid before them the motives of sorrow. In confession they often shed tears over faults which hardly furnished matter for absolution. On the children especially the greatest care was bestowed from their earliest years. The parents repeated to them the instructions of their pastors, and spared no pains in giving them a true Christian bringing-up, and in setting them a good example. And thus it came about that they ordinarily carried their baptismal innocence to the grave. They all lived together as brothers in Christ, and seemed to have but one heart and one soul. They were courteous, gentle, and kind, and so charitable that they would deprive themselves of the barest necessities in order to help the unfortunate. They strove most zealously to convert their heathen fellow-countrymen, and to free them from the bonds of death; and when these latter visited the Reductions, the happiness, union, and quiet cheerfulness which met them on all sides, made such an impression on them that they often begged to stay there, and joyfully embraced Christianity. To conclude with the words of the historian Muratori: "Those nations," he writes, "who were formerly like wild beasts themselves, and lived with wild beasts in woods, caves, and thickets, thinking only of murder and revenge, continually craving after human flesh, and wallowing in drunkenness and lust—those fierce wolves are now trans-

formed into gentle lambs and harmless doves, exhibiting for the most part such modesty, charity, devotion, and blamelessness of life, that in them we seem to see reproduced the first ages of the Church.”¹

SECTION XLVI.

RELIGIOUS ORDERS IN THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES—THE SOCIETY OF JESUS—OTHER ORDERS FOR MEN—THE CAPUCHINS—ORDERS FOR WOMEN—DIFFERENT SAINTS OF THIS PERIOD: ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO, ST. FRANCIS DE SALES, ST. VINCENT DE PAUL, B. PETER CANISIUS—OTHER FAMOUS SAINTS—ST. ALPHONSUS LIGUORI—DIVINE CONFIRMATION OF SANCTITY BY UNQUESTIONABLE MIRACLES.

“The holy men who offered themselves and often their lives with such ardent zeal for the conversion of the heathen, belonged for the most part, to religious orders. Francis Xavier and those others by whom the faith was planted in China and in Paraguay, were Jesuits, *i.e.*, members of the Society of Jesus. This order, founded in 1540 by St. Ignatius of Loyola, a man filled with burning zeal for the honour of God, was especially efficacious in spreading the Catholic faith and in combating the new errors, in doing which it earned for itself the implacable hatred and bitter persecution of the enemies of religion.”

AMONGST the many consolations which were vouchsafed to the Church even at the very time of the Reformation, was the great revival which then took place in the religious life. Grievous and scandalous had been the many apostasies of monks and nuns; but God even turned this evil to good, and by its means purged the existing orders of their useless members. The working of Divine Providence however, for the good of the Catholic Church, was especially manifested in the many new orders which were at this time raised up one after another for her protection and extension, and which added to her glory by the practice of the highest virtues. We have seen in the foregoing history of the missions to the heathen, how blessed

¹ Muratori, “The Happy Christianity of Paraguay,” vol. i. chap. xi.

the labours of the Dominicans and Franciscans had been in many lands, especially in the West Indies, Mexico, Peru, and New Granada. These, with a great many other religious—Augustinians, Benedictines, &c.—had watered with their sweat and often with their blood, the seed of the Gospel among the heathen. But the harvest indeed was great, and the number of labourers comparatively very few. Help however soon came, by means of a new order, which devoted itself especially to the conversion of the heathen, and whose professed members were on this account bound by a special vow to repair at once to any mission whither the Pope might send them. And this vow of theirs was no mere empty promise. For soon in all parts of the world the new messengers of the Gospel were to be found. St. Francis Xavier, of whom we have already heard, Robert de Nobili, John de Britto, and most of the apostles of India; Ricci, Schall, and Verbiest, who spread the faith in China; those again who transformed into paradise the wilds of Brazil and Paraguay; blessed Peter Claver; the Canadian missionaries of whom we have spoken, and countless others who carried the faith among the wildest barbarians,—all these were of the “Company of Jesus,” founded by St. Ignatius of Loyola in 1540.

Ignatius was born of a noble family, in the Spanish castle of Loyola, in 1491, and gave himself up to the profession of arms, for which he was well fitted by his ardent and energetic temperament. His courage and conduct at the defence of Pampeluna against the French in 1521, gained him great distinction, and when, after being severely wounded, he fell into the hands of the enemy, they treated the brave knight with great distinction. He was brought to his father's castle to await his recovery, and whilst there wished to pass away the time by reading books of chivalry. The only books he could procure however, were the Lives of Christ and of the saints, and to these he applied himself. The longer he read the greater his interest became. What especially delighted him was the heroic courage with which the saints despised the things of earth, and made God alone the goal of all their efforts. He now recognised how vain had been his own striving after worldly honour and fame. His soul was penetrated with sorrow. Looking at the example of the saints, he asked himself, as Augustine had done before, “What these have done can I not also do?” Extraordinary graces com-

pleted his conversion, and thus, just at the very time of Luther's apostasy, the Church gained one of her most valiant champions. Ignatius corresponded with his whole soul to this new call, of the reality of which the light of grace assured him; and from that time his resolution was unalterably fixed of consecrating himself entirely to God's service. As soon as his wound was healed, he left his father's castle and repaired to the shrine of the miraculous image of Our Lady of Montserrat, and there, with the deepest contrition, made a general confession at the feet of a holy monk. His chivalrous ideas led him to watch for a night before the holy image, as candidates for knighthood had been used to watch their arms, before receiving the accolade. On the following morning he received holy communion, consecrated himself to God by a vow of perpetual chastity, and hung up his sword beside the altar of Our Lady. He gave his rich clothes to a poor man, and dressed himself in the habit of a pilgrim. Returning then to the little town of Manresa, he lived quite unknown in the hospital, begging his bread from door to door, and leading a life of the greatest austerity. To satisfy still further his thirst for suffering, and the ardour of his devotion, he retired to a cave in the neighbourhood, where, by the severest penances and most constant prayer, he freed his soul from all remaining earthly attachments, and, overwhelmed by a torrent of divine grace, was endowed with an attraction of inconceivable strength towards what was good and holy. Enlightened by the Holy Ghost, he has discovered to us in his spiritual exercises as they are called, how, by a successive consideration of the end of life and the four last things, the man of good will is first moved to a deep and effectual contrition for his past sins; and then, through the contemplation of the mysteries of the sacred humanity, to a firm resolution of regulating his future life according to the will of God and the example of Jesus Christ. These exercises were afterwards approved by the Holy See; and their effects have been so beneficial among all classes of Christians, that two hundred years since, St. Francis de Sales said, that

he believed the book had saved as many souls as it contained letters.

Even at the time of which we have been speaking, the idea had occurred to the mind of Ignatius, of forming a spiritual army, which should recognise the Lord Jesus Christ for its Leader, and should strive with its whole force for the promotion of "the greater glory of God."

In the conviction that it was necessary that a servant of the Church should be possessed of solid learning, he put away all considerations of human respect, and set himself to obtain it; and Ignatius, a man of thirty, a brave warrior and renowned knight, might be seen in the school of Barcelona, seated on a bench among the boys, patiently acquiring the elements of Latin. Afterwards he repaired successively to the universities of Alcalá, Salamanca, and Paris, to complete his philosophical and theological studies. Everywhere he toiled meanwhile to gain souls for heaven, and in so doing exposed himself to much slander and persecution—the foretaste of those fierce storms which were to break forth later, both against himself and his order. At the University of Paris several distinguished young men joined themselves to him. Of these, four—including Francis Xavier, the future apostle of the Indies—were Spaniards, one was a Portuguese, and one, Peter Favre, whose work in Germany later on bore great fruits, was a Savoyard.

With these six companions, on the Feast of the Assumption, August 15, 1534, he took vows of poverty and chastity in the church of Montmartre, together with an additional vow, by which they bound themselves, when their studies should be over, to labour for God's glory in the Holy Land; or, if after a year's waiting this should not be possible, to place themselves at the disposal of the Pope for any mission he might appoint.

But Divine Providence did not destine the new order now in process of formation, for any one country, but for the whole Church and the whole world; and it thus came to pass that the first design of Ignatius was frustrated by a war

which just then broke out against the Turks. He and his companions therefore, whose number had now increased to nine, set out for Rome, to offer their services to Pope Paul III., and lay before him the plan of the future "Society of Jesus." Paul, when he had become acquainted with their project, exclaimed in admiration, "Truly in this is the finger of God!"

The internal constitution of this order does indeed bear witness to the high wisdom of its founder. It is the realisation of the dream of many a statesman, combining in itself all the advantages of a monarchy with none of its dangers and evils. The whole society, spread as it is throughout all lands, is under the guidance of its General; and it is his office to maintain everywhere discipline, order, and union, in thought and action. He makes such enactments as times and circumstances require; sends members to all parts of the world as he judges profitable for God's glory; elects superiors, thus excluding intrigue and ambition; and possesses full powers for the carrying out of all good works. Should he, however, be guilty of any fault; should he abuse the authority given him by his position, the order is able not merely to depose, but to expel him, as it would do any other member who should be unfaithful to his vocation. It is moreover provided, that in the case of a General being simply negligent in the discharge of his office, the order itself becomes entitled to interfere for the remedying of abuses. By the "order" the body of professed Jesuits is here exclusively understood, who, should such a case occur, would meet together by their delegates in a general chapter. Thus, comprehensive as the power of the General may be, it is nevertheless wisely regulated and limited. The supreme power culminates, not in him, but in the body of the professed, to which alone also belongs the power of making laws. The enactments of the General are indeed valid, and to be exactly observed; but it is only from a general assembly of the professed Jesuits that they acquire the force of law. That a body such as this should abuse its powers for the overturning of the supreme authority, as often happens with constitutional governments, there is, however, in this case no danger; for, as we shall see, only men of proved and long-tried virtue are received among the professed, and each of these individually binds himself by vow never to strive for the attainment of any dignity whatever, either within or without the order, and to point it out to the General should any one else be guilty of doing so. "Thus," as it has been justly said, "the order presents a most complete model of a well-organised constitutional monarchy (on a

religious basis), and sets forth the wise principles of a perfect legislation."¹ Above all things, what this legislation is remarkable for, is the spirit of charity and noble liberty which penetrates it. Its members are to serve God, not from servile fear, but from filial love. Thus St. Ignatius would not have his rule, or the commands of superiors, to be in themselves binding under pain of sin, unless it should happen, as is not often the case, that a command is given in the name of holy obedience, or of Jesus Christ.

The object which St. Ignatius had in view in the foundation of his order, was exclusively the promotion of the greater glory of God. He desired to create a spiritual militia, directed by the Holy Spirit of God, whose services should be ever ready to be employed, at the bidding of the common Father of the faithful, in the conversion of heathens and heretics, the instruction of youth, the cultivation of science, and in promoting the increase of faith, virtue, and piety amongst Catholics, by means of missions, retreats, sermons, and catechisings, the hearing of confessions, the visiting of hospitals and prisons, and other works of charity and zeal. This spiritual army was to consist only of men of solid learning and proved virtue; and for this reason its holy founder willed that the making of the final vows should be preceded, not only by study, but by a long probation and careful training in the ascetic life. A two years' novitiate, spent entirely in exercises of piety and self-abnegation, is, first, to renew the interior man and establish him in the fear of God and in the constant endeavour to attain to Christian perfection. Again, after the completion of his studies and the reception of priest's orders, a third year's novitiate confirms the heavenward disposition of his soul, and fills his heart with zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of his fellow-men. Seventeen to eighteen years are usually passed in the order before the taking of the final vows. But that all the members of the order, and not the professed only, should be consecrated by their own free offering of themselves to the service of God, St. Ignatius has provided that the three usual vows of religion should be taken besides the solemn vows of the professed; and this is done at the close of the two years' novitiate, when the young religious binds himself, though not solemnly, to observe poverty, chastity, and obedience, for life, and thereby becomes, according to the express declaration of the Holy See, truly a religious, and a member of the order.

After a careful examination of the constitution of the new order, it was confirmed by Paul III. in 1540, and afterwards was fully approved by the Council of Trent. Ignatius was

¹ Alzog, "*Universal geschichte des christlichen Kirche*," sect. 346.

chosen to be the first General, in spite of his reluctance; and he fixed his residence in Rome, that he might be near the Holy Father, at whose service he had placed his little army. The new order increased rapidly, and extended during the remaining fifteen years of its holy founder's life into every kingdom of Europe, and from thence to India, Japan, Abyssinia, and Brazil. Ignatius ended his meritorious life on the 30th of July 1556. The last word which fell from his dying lips was the sweet name of Jesus. Besides his own society, he left behind him other important monuments of his zeal for souls. Both the *Collegia Romana* and the *Collegia Germanica* in Rome are of his founding. In the former, instruction is given in all branches of human learning, and in the latter, promising German youths are trained into capable and zealous priests, that they may labour afterwards with fruit in their own country. Ignatius was canonised by Pope Gregory XV. in 1622.

Animated by that spirit of zeal and charity which their great founder had breathed into them, the sons of St. Ignatius everywhere strove to fulfil the charge with which he had been wont to send them forth: "Go, and inflame all with the fire of divine love." Everywhere where they were able to establish themselves, they founded numerous colleges, in which they trained young men in virtue and piety, and prepared them to fill the highest positions in Church and State. By means of missions, preaching, and hearing confessions, they revived the Christian life where it was seemingly dying out. Many—martyrs of charity—sacrificed their lives in attendance on the plague stricken, while others suffered actual martyrdom in bloody persecutions. Not heathen lands alone—China, India, Japan, and North and South America—but many European countries which heresy had invaded, were watered with their blood. The Company of Jesus altogether reckons eight hundred martyrs among its sons. That it might be true to its vocation as the faithful auxiliary of Holy Church, it applied itself expressly to defending her against the attacks of heretics. From its

very foundation, it was the aim of the Company of Jesus to form a powerful barrier against the advancing tide of heresy, to protect Catholic countries from infection, and to instruct the erring and to lead them back to the unity of the Church. Thus it necessarily became a mark for the fiercest attacks of the enemies of the faith; and the advice given by Calvin,¹ that "the Jesuits, who most oppose us, should either be killed, or, if this cannot well be done, driven away, and at any rate put down by lies and slander," still remains the common watchword of heretics and infidels.

"God raised up other orders also to labour in union with the secular clergy, for the healing of the wounds which Luther and his followers had inflicted upon the mystical body of the Church. The pious Capuchin fathers, who issued from the order of St. Francis of Assisi, laboured successfully in the cure of souls, and were eminent for their charitable zeal and austere life. The Piarists devoted themselves to the instruction of youth, and other religious orders to the care of the sick."

Orders and religious congregations sprung up in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as numerous as they had ever done in the most flourishing ages of the Church. Pious souls in all parts of Catholic Christendom strove in holy rivalry after the attainment of man's highest end, and generously renounced the world, the more efficiently by their united labours to promote God's glory, and to aid their fellow-men in all their wants and trials. Many of these pious brotherhoods devoted themselves especially to the apostolic vocation, and endeavoured by word and example to excite in men's hearts greater zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Such were the Capuchins, Theatines, Barnabites, the Oratorians of St. Philip Neri, the Lazarists, and others. Some again, occupied themselves in the bringing up and instruction of the young. Amongst these were the Piarists, the Somaschi, the Brothers of the Christian Schools, and the Oratorians founded by Cardinal Berulle, &c. Many societies did inestimable service to the Church

¹ In his pamphlet entitled "*De Modo Propagandi Calvinismum*," of which copies of undoubted authenticity are kept in Zurich and other libraries.

by devoting themselves to the education of the clergy. Amongst these may be classed the "Association of Secular Priests,"¹ founded in Germany by the venerable Bartholomew Halzhauser, and which worked there long and beneficially. The Trappists vied with the ancient Anchorites in the austerity of their lives, and were, besides, the admiration of the world by their well-ordered industry, and their untiring energy in cultivating barren tracts of land. Other communities again arose, which gave themselves up with the most heroic detachment to the care of the sick. Such were the Brothers of Mercy, the Servants of the Sick, or Fathers of a Good Death, the Bethlehemites, and others. Many of these congregations came eventually to combine different pious aims: so it often happened that those specially devoted to the cure of souls might be seen in the hospitals serving the sick; whilst those to whom the latter work specially belonged, exercised, by means of word and example, a most efficacious apostolate at the bedside of their patients. It is with reluctance that we forbear giving a more detailed account of the glorious works of these many holy societies. Some mention, however, must be made of the order of the Capuchins, which spread so widely in Germany and the neighbouring countries, and many of the other orders will be also noticed, when we come to speak of their holy founders.

The Capuchin order is a branch of the order of St. Francis, and has for its special object the strict observance of the poverty prescribed by the Franciscan rule. Its origin dates from 1526, but it was only in 1619 that it was allowed by Pope Paul V. to elect a General of its own, independently of the rest of the Franciscans. The new order spread and flourished, and the results of its apostolic labours were felt throughout Europe. It was most successful in bringing back to Catholic unity the Protestants in Germany and the Calvinists in Savoy and Switzerland. The charity, humility, and zeal of

¹ "Institut der in Gemeinschaft lebenden Welt-Priester."

its sons, gained it the respect of Christendom; and it sent forth its missionaries among the most distant heathen. In the eighteenth century the order reckoned fifty provinces and twenty-six thousand members. Among the many holy men whom it has produced, and whose merits have shed undying lustre on Germany, Blessed Laurence of Brundisium, and St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen, may be specially mentioned.

Laurence was by birth an Italian. He was repeatedly sent however, by the Holy See, to Austria, Bohemia, and Bavaria, and he there laboured most efficaciously for the Church. He combated heresy with vigour and undaunted courage, and strengthened the weak and wavering in their faith with a wisdom, gentleness, and charity that won all hearts. He was the terror of heretics, the father of the poor, and the counsellor of princes. Kings and emperors heard his words with reverence, and willingly followed his counsels. He was many times sent by the popes to the courts of Spain and Germany, to forward the interests of the Church, and to promote union among Christian princes; and his prudence and sanctity were often successful in the conduct of affairs which had long baffled human skill. A truly noble and heroic heart beat beneath the poor habit of the friar. Many instances of superhuman virtue and courage which history records of him, want of space compels us to omit, but there is one glorious action which we must mention here. In 1611 the Turks, the hereditary enemies of Christendom, threatened to invade Hungary. Their army numbered 80,000 men, and that of the Christians only 18,000. Father Laurence was with the Christian army, having been sent there by the Pope at the request of its leaders. He animated the soldiers by an eloquent discourse, in which he distinctly promised them victory. Then he made all prepare for combat by prayer, fasting, and the reception of the sacraments. But the leaders having discovered the great disproportion between their forces and those of the enemy, the boldest among them counselled a retreat into the interior of the country. Laurence's advice, however, was asked, and he persistently urged an attack, at the same time distinctly assuring them of victory. Fear then was dismissed, and the army set in order for battle. Father Laurence himself appeared in the front ranks on horseback, dressed in his habit, with the cross in his hand, and urged them powerfully to a sudden and courageous attack. The battle raged furiously. Laurence was for a few minutes surrounded by the enemy. Two captains who freed him, besought him not to expose himself further, but to retire behind the lines. "You are wrong," said he;

"I must remain in front, that is my place," and, holding the cross aloft, he cried, "Forward! my brothers, forward! the victory is ours!" And indeed the battle was soon decided, and a great victory won by the Christians; and this was followed within a few days by another equally glorious. The most unbounded applause was bestowed by the whole army on Father Laurence. The Duke de Mercour, who held the post of commander-in-chief under the Archduke Matthias, declared publicly that Father Laurence had done more to win the day than the whole army, and that, after God and Our Lady, it was to him that the two victories were to be ascribed. Much might be said of the extraordinary humility of this holy man, of his touching modesty, of the wonderful graces with which he was endowed, and of the miracles which he wrought. The fame of his sanctity was so universal, that when he approached any city, people came forth in crowds to meet him, and fell on their knees to receive his blessing. At Milan, the Cardinal-Archbishop Frederigo Borromeo, nephew and successor of St. Charles Borromeo, and heir also to his virtues, fell on his knees before this servant of God, and begged his blessing for himself and his assembled people. Laurence possessed the entire confidence of popes and cardinals, and of kings and princes, and was trusted by them with the most important missions. But nothing gave this humble man so much pain as the marks of honour with which he was overwhelmed. He died a saint in 1619, and was beatified by Pius VI. Of miracles wrought by him during his lifetime, ninety-seven were adduced during the processes of his beatification.

Germany was both the birthplace of St. Fidelis and also the scene of his labours. He was born at Sigmaringen of a noble family. From his earliest youth he had been marked by a special innocence and purity, deep piety, and self-sacrificing charity. He studied law with much success, and had already distinguished himself in the office of a public advocate, when a sudden call of grace moved him to the heroic resolution of entering the Capuchin order. His great zeal in his new calling proved the reality of his vocation. He was highly esteemed and revered both by his brothers in religion and by the people. The former soon submitted themselves to him as their superior with childlike devotion, and his influence over the hearts of seculars was equally great. His words wrought miracles of conversion, and brought back many Calvinists into the bosom of the Church. The fame of his apostolic zeal reached Rome, and he was intrusted with the difficult mission of recovering the canton of the Grisons to the Catholic faith. His efforts were rewarded with great success. Many persons of distinction publicly abjured their errors on hearing him preach; others soon followed their example,

and he so completely won the affection of the common people, that they brought their children to him of their own accord to be instructed in the true faith. A deep hatred however, was awakened against him in the minds of obstinate heretics, and they swore to be revenged. Fidelis foresaw what was coming; he prophesied to many people that his death was at hand, and thenceforth signed his letters, "Father Fidelis, unworthy Capuchin, soon to be the food of worms." On the day of his death he confessed to the priest who accompanied him, said mass, and preached in the parish of Grüşch. He then set off for the adjoining parish of Sevis, because the peasants had sent word that they would hear him if he came. He was aware, however, of the murderous attack which was designed against him, and as they set out said to his companion Father John, "I will now go to Sevis, though I know they are not dealing fairly, and that something very bad is in their hearts." Whilst he was preaching the church was attacked, and a bullet aimed at him entered the wall close by. Fidelis immediately threw himself down before the altar, and begged of God the grace to suffer death with constancy for His Name. A compassionate Calvinist advised him to remain in the church. "Do not be anxious on my account," he replied. "I fear no more for my life; I have offered it to God." On his way back he was attacked by twenty armed peasants; these demanded of him that he should abjure his faith, and on his steadfastly refusing beat him to death. He prayed amid the blows, "Jesus! Mary! Have mercy on me, O God!" and begged forgiveness for his murderers. The body of the saint was hardly recognisable. The left side of his head was crushed to pieces, and more than twenty stabs were found in his breast. Nearly all his left ribs were broken, and his whole body was covered with wounds. Thus died the holy martyr Fidelis, on the 24th of April 1622. God wrought many miracles through his intercession, and since the year 1746 he has been honoured by the Church as a saint.

"Institutions for women also arose, such as the order of the Ursulines, and the orders of the Visitation, the Good Shepherd, and the English Ladies, having for their object the training of young girls to a pious and Christian life."

Among women too, the religious life underwent a most beneficial awakening. Very many female congregations were formed about this time, which, owing to the great number of pious souls who were desirous of consecrating themselves to God in religion, grew rapidly and spread themselves in all directions. Who does not admire these high-

souled women, who, renouncing the world in the very bloom of their youth, gave themselves up without reserve to the service of God and of their neighbour? Their heroic virtue is alike to be honoured, whether it led them to offer themselves continually to God in a life of strict seclusion, or to more openly advance His honour by educating the young to a life of piety, tending the sick, or showing mercy to the helpless and fallen. Of these many female congregations, we will here mention only those, of the English Ladies, and the Good Shepherd. Others will be noticed when we come to speak of the lives of their holy founders.

The former of these two orders owes its origin to a pious young Englishwoman named Mary Ward. She was born in 1585, and while still very young was obliged to leave England, with the rest of her family, on account of the Catholic faith. Later on her vocation was made known to her:—that she was to devote herself, namely, in company with other women, to the training of young girls in a life of piety. By zeal and perseverance she succeeded in founding houses for this purpose in many of the countries of Europe. At the present day the congregation labours, not in Germany only, but also in Bucharest, Ireland, India, and America, with the best results, and deserves the gratitude both of the present and coming generations by its careful instruction and pious bringing up of those committed to its charge. The order of the Nuns of the Good Shepherd was founded by a widow named Maria de Combé, who was gifted with a wonderful zeal for souls. Born in Holland, the very stronghold of Protestantism, she had however, been converted to the Catholic faith in France, and devoted herself with admirable zeal to works of piety and charity. She experienced the deepest pity for the unhappy condition of fallen women, and made it the object of her life to found an institute which should render them efficacious help. Notwithstanding her narrow means she succeeded, through persevering zeal and unbounded confidence in God, in accomplishing the difficult task; and before long the charity of the faithful provided for her a

house and chapel to be devoted to this pious work. Persons of blameless life were received, besides the voluntary penitents. These latter were trained to habits of virtue and industry, and children and orphans were brought up and educated. This congregation continues to flourish vigorously, and in our own time has spread widely in America, as well as in Europe. With the most self-sacrificing patience and charity, these good nuns devote themselves to the salvation and amendment of a most miserable class of beings, and in so doing render the greatest service to humanity.

“This age was especially rich in men whose lives were shining patterns of faith and virtue : St. Charles Borromeo (died 1584), Cardinal Archbishop of Milan, during the time that the plague was raging in that city, set a most glorious example of true Christian love for his neighbour. He visited the sick in the most dangerous places, in the Lazarettos and hospitals, and gave up everything he possessed, even to his own bed, for their use.”

To justify their defection from the Church, her enemies have never ceased to calumniate her. She was demoralised they said ; all higher life was dead in her ; she had fallen a prey to error, and had turned aside to idolatry and the service of Satan ; and it was needful therefore, that a pure Church should arise, founded on the unadulterated Word of God. But where is it, we may well ask, that those heroic virtues, those great saints, are to be found by which the true Church is to be known as a tree by its fruits ? History as we have seen, proves only too plainly that a flood of corruption spread itself everywhere in the wake of the new teaching. And if the bulk of Protestants have continued to lead good and moral lives, it is because they have followed their own better instincts and the voice of conscience, rather than the destructive principles of the founders of their several sects. Saints, properly so called, we find nowhere outside the pale of the Catholic Church. This is a truth which none can gainsay who are capable of grasping the idea of Christian virtue in its higher forms. Leibnitz, though a Protestant, candidly admits as much in his last great work, “*System of Theology*.” “It is only in that Church,” he says, “which has preserved the name and character of Catholic, that we find those superhuman examples of heroic virtue and spiritual life ; but there they are everywhere manifested and cherished.” It is well worthy of note too, that, just at the very time of the great secession from her fold, the Church, which was then decried as being entirely

degenerate, was able to show a very large number of men who were examples of the most exalted virtue and sanctity ; and that this should be so, furnishes a most striking note of her truth and divinity. Many of these great patterns of Christian holiness have been already mentioned in the course of this history, but some of the most remarkable yet remain to be spoken of.

Foremost among these is St. Charles Borromeo, the great Archbishop of Milan, who furnishes us with a glorious example of a true reformer of the Church. He rightly saw that it was in no defect in the Church's doctrine, but in men's neglect of her precepts, that the true root of evil lay. The diocese over which, as Archbishop of Milan, he presided, was indeed in the greatest need of a reformer of this kind. The secular clergy were, for the most part, ignorant and neglectful of their duties ; discipline had fallen to decay, and the morals of the people were corrupted. The first act of the new archbishop was to summon his fifteen suffragan-bishops to a provincial synod. His powerful words inspired into them the spirit of apostolic zeal ; he concerted measures with them for the removal of abuses and the restoration of Church discipline ; and he made it obligatory that each in his own diocese should hold a yearly synod with his clergy. Throughout his whole life he enforced everywhere with unremitting firmness the observance of the holy decrees of the Council of Trent. His pastoral zeal in so doing was such, that, in the course of the nineteen years during which he was archbishop, he assembled six provincial and eleven diocesan councils. The principal aim which he kept in view was the bringing about of a thorough reformation among the clergy.

Besides the fine college which he had already founded at the University of Pavia, he established three seminaries in Milan for the education of students and priests ; and also in other places three schools, preparatory to these, for boys. Under his rule the monasteries again became the homes of piety and penance. He ministered in person with the most untiring zeal to the wants of his beloved flock. The steepest mountains and the wildest valleys were not for him inacces-

sible, provided that they were inhabited by men. With his staff in his hand, he would often traverse the roughest paths for hours together. He often had to climb over the rocks on his hands and knees, and expose himself indifferently to the burning summer heat and the piercing cold of winter. When he had reached the place to which he was going, however exhausted he might be, he at once began his visitation,—preaching, inspecting the schools, bringing comfort to the homes of poverty and wretchedness, dispensing the sacraments, and consecrating churches. He would then partake with the poor mountaineers of their milk and chestnuts, and sleep on straw or on the bare ground. It was thus that this good shepherd watched over the Swiss portion of his diocese, where the condition of the poor people was made especially miserable by reason of religious disturbances. And in this manner he succeeded, not only in preserving his flock there from heresy and vice, but also in awakening in their hearts an ardent love of virtue. This man, who, except for his human form, seemed to have nothing earthly about him, was regarded even by the Protestants with great veneration, and the whole population of Gardono, in the valley of Mesolina, were converted by his aspect and his preaching to the Catholic faith.

The pastoral zeal of the saintly archbishop was rendered yet more efficacious by his heroic virtues and marvellous life. Zeal and prudence, courage and humility, unwearied energy and ardent devotion, were all united in him in the highest degree and in the most wonderful manner; whilst his own austerity and mortification of life was only equalled by his incomparable gentleness towards penitent sinners, and his tender love for the suffering and oppressed. When, in the year 1572, a great famine occurred in Milan, after a very scanty harvest, he provided food for thousands of starving people. To do so he pawned his household furniture, contracted great debts, collected alms with unwearied assiduity, and thus, from day to day, provided three thousand poor with the necessities of life. During the jubilee of 1575, which he

caused to be celebrated in Milan with great solemnity, he entertained and fed every day six thousand strangers. Each evening he would go to one or other of the hospices, wash the feet of the poor country people on his knees, and then himself serve them at table. But it was only during the fearful outbreak of the plague, which took place in Milan in 1576, that his heroic charity was fully shown. Not in that city only, but in the other places to which the infection spread, he founded the most excellently managed institutions for the care of the sick and the preservation of the healthy. He came with the utmost charity to the assistance of his dying children, consoling them, giving them the sacraments, and receiving their last sighs. Food and clothing grew scarcer as the pestilence spread, and to meet the wants of his flock the archbishop not only contracted large debts, but gave his own ecclesiastical habits to be cut up into garments for the poor, who might thus often be met walking about in the insignia of a cardinal. Late one evening he came home, tired with a long day's work in the service of the sick, and asked for some bread and water, which was the only food he then ever ate; but his servant could bring him water only, as there was neither bread nor money in the house. The saint had given away absolutely everything he possessed, even to the sack of straw on which he slept. Where shall we find a more beautiful example of a good shepherd, who in his fervent love for his sorely-tried flock, spends his all in their service, and, in remembering others, forgets only himself? His example encouraged all the other priests, who, both regular and secular, vied with one another in their devotion to the service of the sick. (See further, vol. ii. p. 548.)

“St. Francis de Sales, Prince-Bishop of Geneva (died 1622), brought back, by the invincible power of his gentleness, seventy-two thousand Savoyards from Calvin's heresy to the truth.”

As God in His mercy had willed to restore and increase the glory of His Church in the north of Italy through the holy example and apostolic zeal of St. Charles Borromeo, so

too in Savoy, His grace wrought equal wonders by means of St. Francis de Sales, Prince-Bishop of Geneva. Fostered in piety from his childhood, the truths of religion had early sunk deep into his mind. Under the wise guidance of pious teachers, the supernatural direction of his heart impelled him so irresistibly towards God, that, while yet very young, he had made a vow of perpetual chastity, and resolved upon consecrating himself to God in the priesthood. When afterwards, on communicating his intention, he was told that as the eldest son of a noble family he was called on to fill a great place in the world, he answered with firmness, "Let the advantages which the world offers be what they may, what would it profit me to gain even the whole world if so my soul should suffer loss? God has long since given me a hatred of the world, and has infused into me so great a love for Him and fear of His judgments that I prefer His grace before all things." He had not been a priest quite a year when his zeal for souls made him resolve on devoting himself to a most arduous work, the conversion, namely, of the Calvinist population of the Chablis. The Calvinist town of Geneva had risen against its legitimate sovereign the Duke of Savoy, and together with others of his possessions, had taken from him this province, into which, with a savage delight in the destruction of everything Catholic, Calvinism was then introduced. Later on however, the duke reconquered the territory, and desired to restore the ancient faith.

When St. Francis first entered the region of the Chablis to begin his holy work, and beheld from the summit of a castle the numbers of ruined churches and convents, and the wasted villages and towns, his heart was filled with the deepest grief, and he prayed with tears: "Lord, the nations have risen up against Thee and Thine anointed, have seized Thine inheritance, profaned Thy temple, and laid waste Thy sanctuary. Arise and judge Thy cause, but judge it with mercy and clemency." The mission of the saint in this district was not only a toilsome and difficult one, but had to be

carried on also at his own utmost peril. He had entered the country however, in the spirit of an apostle, and would willingly have laid down his life for the salvation of its miserable inhabitants. A guard was offered him whilst preaching, on the part of the government; but this he constantly refused, desiring to appear among the people, only as an apostle of Christ and a messenger of peace. In a thousand dangers God's hand wonderfully protected him. The wrath of his enemies was suddenly calmed when they were just prepared to slay him;—once, for instance, hired assassins were lying in wait for him on the road by which he had to pass; when they sprang out upon him, he said, with perfect calmness and gentleness, "My friends, you have mistaken your man; for you cannot desire to slay one who has never done you harm, and who would at any moment lay down his life for you." Disarmed by his words, the men fell contrite at his feet and implored his forgiveness. The apostolic power, the inexpressible gentleness and charity of the saint, were such that the most hardened hearts could not long withstand him, and within a few years his triumph was complete. In writing to the Holy Father concerning the results of his mission, he says: "When I first began the work, in sixty-five parishes there were scarcely a hundred Catholics; now one could scarcely find a hundred of the Reformed." The number of Calvinists whom he converted is estimated at about seventy-two thousand.

The saint was dismayed to find himself, on his return from his mission, elected Bishop of Geneva, and it was only on the most pressing entreaty, and in virtue of holy obedience, that he accepted the high dignity. He prepared himself carefully for his consecration, and made for himself a series of the most excellent rules, for the leading of a simple, mortified, and holy life. And with what faithfulness he observed them even to his death, it is impossible to describe! Whatever property or revenue he possessed, he shared it with the poor; and where necessity required it, he gave away his furniture and clothes. When on his visitations in the mountainous districts of Switzerland, he was delighted to share in the

poverty of the inhabitants; and he would often sleep from choice on straw in the poorest huts. "I have never," he once said, "found so bad a lodging as the stable at Bethlehem, nor so hard a bed as the cross; but our Lord and Saviour willed to be born in one, and to die upon the other." Amongst all the virtues of this saint, his wonderful gentleness was the most remarkable; and in him it was the more meritorious, being the fruit of extraordinary self-conquest and long struggle with a temperament naturally hasty. (See vol. iii. p. 695.) Through the continual and heroic exercise of this virtue, it became so entirely part of his nature that it seemed to overflow from him in every look and movement, so that men seemed to see shown forth in him the exact likeness of our loving Saviour Himself. Here lay the mysterious power that his very presence exercised on all, and that gave such wonderful efficacy to his words and sermons, for the conversion of sinners and the recovery of heretics to the faith. This gentleness of spirit we still discern, animating all his writings. In them the saint yet lives and breathes, inspiring thousands of souls with the love of piety and virtue.

St. Francis de Sales was the founder of the beautiful order of the Nuns of the Visitation. This order aims both at the attainment of individual perfection by its members, and at the exercise of charity to others. In it persons of all ranks were equally received; piety, humility, and virtue being alone required for admission to it. Widows, and the aged and infirm likewise, were not excluded, because the houses of the Visitation were intended to represent that supper of the Heavenly Bridegroom to which the sick, the lame, and the blind were invited. The order was grounded upon the virtues of interior humility and mortification, and the saint knew how to breathe into it the spirit of true evangelical charity. "We must die," he used to say to his spiritual daughters, "in order that God may live in us; for it is impossible for us to unite our souls with Him in any other way." This order was confirmed by Pope Paul V. in 1618, and has continued to do immense good up to the present time, especially

in the education of young girls. One of its chief glories, Sister Margaret Mary Alacoque, who has been not long since beatified, was chosen by our Lord in a special manner to honour His Sacred Heart, and commissioned by Him to spread the devotion to it among men.

“St. Vincent de Paul (died 1660) devoted his whole life to the service of the poor and afflicted. There was no kind or form of suffering, in the relief of which he did not expend the power and fulness of his love. He built orphanages and foundling hospitals, organised a company of missionary priests for the instruction of the ignorant peasantry, instituted a society for the amelioration of the condition of galley slaves, and founded his most admirable order of Sisters of Charity for the care of the sick.”

Vincent de Paul was the son of poor peasants. In his boyhood he had kept cattle, and his education was provided for by strangers. When he had been a short time in orders, and was still very young, he was taken prisoner by Turkish pirates (see vol. iv. p. 812 or 816); and after having, by God's Providence, been released and brought back to France, he laboured there as a simple priest. This man, to all appearance so unremarkable, was nevertheless a chosen vessel by whose means the Church was to be glorified, and who was to be the instrument of salvation to millions. This was the hero of Christian charity to whom all centuries will accord their tribute of praise, and to whose greatness even the fierce revolutionists of 1789 were unable to refuse homage; for whilst they heaped scorn on all the other saints, before him the voice of blasphemy was stilled, and in honour of his memory they resolved to allow his bust a place in their Pantheon. The life of St. Vincent is but one series of the most marvellous works of charity. It seemed as though God's Providence had chosen him to be its representative at whose hands the miserable should receive the tenderest relief and care. The most unhappy class of men whose misery Vincent was called to alleviate, were without doubt, the numbers of criminals and galley slaves who were confined in the dark prisons of Paris and the galleys of Marseilles. Vincent having been recommended to Louis XIII. as a

fitting spiritual physician for these unhappy men, that king appointed him royal almoner to the galleys. He set off for Marseilles, and applied himself with the greatest zeal to his new calling. The flock which had been intrusted to him he found to be sunk in the most indescribable bodily and spiritual wretchedness. They were heavily chained, packed together in dark close holds, and covered with vermin. Sick and well were chained alike; the latter were devoured by worms while yet alive, and too often died unreconciled with God, uttering imprecations and blasphemies. The indescribable wretchedness of the condition of these his children drew forth from Vincent bitter tears. Having in the first instance fallen away from God through their crimes, they had come to be regarded by their fellow-men as the offscouring of the human race, for whom no punishment could be too heavy; and their hearts accordingly were filled with rage and malice, and their very breath was cursing and blasphemy. In dealing with such men it was necessary, before all things, to win their confidence; and the piety and divinely-enlightened zeal of Vincent taught him the way to their hearts. He bore every insult with the utmost gentleness and patience, and the more repelling and offensive their behaviour to him was, the more zealous he showed himself in services and works of love towards them. He came among them like an angel of mercy, full of kindness towards all, and of sympathy for their unhappy lot; and when in this manner he had won their hearts, they came to regard him as their spiritual father and to listen to his words. "There is nothing," he wrote, "to be done with the convicts amongst whom I live, except by gentleness. When I have pitied their sufferings, felt their heavy chains, and shown them the sorrow which I feel at the sight of their misery, then they will listen to me." The most obdurate sinners could not long withstand his love, but ended by being converted and reconciling themselves to God by a general confession. From Marseilles, Vincent went to Paris, and by his means the same miracles of grace were repeated in the prisons of the capital. Full of

fatherly love for his charge, the saint never rested till both in Paris and Marseilles, more wholesome dwellings for the prisoners, and hospitals for the sick, had been provided, where both their bodily and spiritual health should be cared for.

At the same time that Vincent was doing all in his power for the assistance of criminals, the needs of another class scarcely less wretched called forth his compassion in its behalf. In the streets of the cities were to be seen immense numbers of people who subsisted entirely on begging, and were given up to the most pernicious idleness, and who were as poor as they were ignorant and vicious. Vincent prayed to God for them, and courageously set about remedying the evil. He founded a society by whom the names of the poor were to be registered, and who were to distribute to them the means of support, engaging them, at the same time, to give up begging and follow some employment, to attend the religious instructions, and go every month to the sacraments. Later on, at the instance also of the saint, who became director of the institution, a hospital was founded for beggars through the benevolence of Christian women, where nearly five thousand found a refuge. He also founded another hospital for such old people as needed special care, and here both their bodily and spiritual wants were well attended to, and they were aided in making a good preparation for death.

Another thing that touched St. Vincent's heart was the pitiable fate of the numbers of foundling children who were exposed by their cruel mothers. From three to four hundred of these poor little creatures were annually found in the streets of Paris, and very many, as the saint knew, fell into bad hands and perished miserably. He therefore zealously urged upon some noble ladies that they should take charge of these unhappy beings and provide for their maintenance. At one time the undertaking was nearly abandoned for want of courage in its supporters, but the eloquence of Vincent prevailed on them to continue it. "Well," he said, "you have adopted these little creatures out of Christian charity as your children. If you cease to be their mothers you must

become their judges, for you have the power over them of life and death. If you keep them, they will live; if not, they will die. It is for you to pronounce the sentence; I will collect the votes." The whole assembly burst into tears, and it was unanimously resolved that the work which had been begun should be carried on at all costs.

The labours of this holy man increased in proportion to the occurrence or spread of any necessity. At such times Divine Providence caused alms to flow abundantly, and multiplied its blessing upon them a thousandfold. This was strikingly instanced in the help afforded by him to the poor inhabitants of Lorraine. Since the year 1635 this province had been fearfully devastated by the Thirty Years' War. Many villages were almost entirely destroyed; the fields and meadows lay waste, and hunger and sickness had reduced the people to the last extreme of misery, so that in order to preserve life they would devour the most revolting substances for food. All through this terrible famine, alms literally poured from Vincent's hands into all the places where they were needed. One of his messengers made fifty journeys to Lorraine, in the course of which he carried thither two million francs, and was repeatedly saved as though by miracle, from robbers who lay in wait for him. Besides all this, he sent a hundred and sixty poor girls to Paris, and supported many others who had fled thither and were perishing from want. Similar times of need occurred often in other places during the life of the saint, and in these his help was always forthcoming. Vincent was as a father and an angel of mercy to all who needed assistance. All alike, whether oppressed Maronites from Lebanon, Christian slaves, or Irish exiles, found in him the most loving sympathy and support. God's Providence was his inexhaustible treasury, and to this he looked with the most unshaken trust in every need. It is impossible to hear without wonder that alms to the amount of twenty-four million francs passed during his lifetime through the hands of this poor priest.

God's Providence, which raised up St. Vincent de Paul to

be an instrument of its love, did not design that so bright a light should be restricted to one region only, or to the short space of a man's life; it was destined on the contrary, to shine over many lands, and spread blessings through future ages. St. Vincent trained up many young men and women to carry on his work. The institution of Sisters of Charity owes its existence to him. He had very early founded societies of women for the carrying out of his charitable schemes. After a long probation he allowed some of their most pious and steady members to devote themselves exclusively to the care of the sick. Such were to be consecrated to God by the vow of chastity; but without strict enclosure, and therefore of tried virtue. Notwithstanding the weakness of their sex, and the many dangers they ran, he boldly trusted them to God's protection. "Your convents," he said to them, "are the houses of the poor; your chapels, the parish churches; your enclosure, obedience; your grate, the fear of God; and your veil, holy modesty." The members of this order make simple vows for a few years only, and then renew them. The congregation was approved by Clement IX. in 1668. The Sisters of Charity are everywhere known and loved, and the good they do being acknowledged with admiration by all candid minds, anything we could here add would be superfluous.

In all Vincent's works of mercy, the great object which he had before his eyes was the salvation of souls. It was his desire that the poor and sick, through kindness and gentleness, through words of consolation and warning, and through fervent prayer, should be detached from vice, won to virtue, and prepared for the reception of the sacraments. For these ends he continued to give missions in the country and spiritual exercises in his own house, to the very end of his life, and even in his extreme old age he entered with the greatest zeal on such works of spiritual mercy, and produced through them the most wonderful fruits. Here too, his services were rendered lasting by the congregation which he founded of missionary priests, who have received the name of Lazarists,

from their principal house, St. Lazare, in Paris. The aim of this admirable congregation, which was approved by Pope Urban VIII., is, besides the individual perfecting of its members, to extend God's kingdom upon earth, to stimulate the faithful to virtue by means of missions, to assist the clergy everywhere in the duties of their office, and to labour to the extent of its power for the conversion of the heathen. Since the time of St. Vincent, his sons have zealously carried on his work, and the harvest is a rich one, which these good labourers have gathered and still continue to gather, into the storehouse of the Divine Householder.

"In Peter Canisius, who was beatified in 1864 by Pope Pius IX., God's Providence raised up a powerful barrier in Germany, especially in Austria and Bavaria, to the progress of heresy. He combated it both by his preaching and writings, and founded schools and pious institutions for the maintenance and quickening of the faith."

Amongst the great saints of this period who exercised their ministry in the countries about Germany, combating heresy and vice, guiding the erring and sinners on the way of salvation, and showing themselves true shepherds and fathers of the faithful, Blessed Peter Canisius, who was raised up by God as the protector of the Church in our own unhappy land, well deserves mention. He was born at Nymwegen, in the same year (1521) as that in which St. Ignatius received the memorable wound in the battle of Pampeluna, which caused him to quit the warfare of this world and enrol himself as a soldier of Jesus Christ. And it was into the society of which St. Ignatius was the founder, that Blessed Peter Canisius was one day destined to enter; and under the leadership of its head, that he was to do battle for the Church in Germany, revive the Catholic faith, and save countless souls, nay whole provinces even, from apostasy. When Canisius first entered on his work, the condition of religion in Germany was most deplorable. Heresy was at that time especially active in its endeavours to insinuate itself everywhere, and to seize for its representatives the pulpits

in the cities, the chairs in the universities, and the influential places in the government. The clergy, who should have been its opponents, were discouraged. Great numbers of them were ignorant, and some were inclined towards the innovators. The parishes were often left without priests, or with such priests only as were no credit to their office. The authorities, for the most part, were zealous supporters of Protestantism, and hindered to the best of their power all measures taken by the Emperor in behalf of the Church. They even went so far as to demand from him fresh concessions, as the price of their aid against the common enemy, the Turks. Then if ever, Germany stood in need of help from on high, if the true faith were not entirely to perish out of her. St. Ignatius, deeply troubled at the state of the country, had already on different occasions sent thither four of his first companions, namely Favre, Le Jay, Salmeron, and Bobadilla; but to neither of these was a long course of successful labour granted. Le Jay died young, the others were forced to employ their activity elsewhere, and Germany was still left waiting for an apostle, who, armed with divine power, should raise up the oppressed Church and cause her to triumph gloriously over her enemies. And such an apostle had been provided for her in the blessed Peter Canisius. From his earliest youth, God had specially protected him, and had markedly endowed him with a tender fervency in prayer and a predilection for heavenly things. He also had the advantage during his years of study, of a most excellent director, who guided him onwards in the path of holiness, and to whom he on his part daily confided with a generous humility his actions, words, and even his most secret thoughts. Eventually it was God's will that he should become acquainted at Mayence, with Father Peter Favre, and by his means led to join the Society of Jesus. He had already, as a young priest at Cologne, given proofs of extraordinary zeal, which had won public recognition. Herman von Wied, the misguided Archbishop of Cologne, had at that time invited some of the innovators into the city, thus bringing ravaging

wolves into Christ's fold. The firmness with which Canisius opposed the heresies of the new teachers, and the high esteem in which he was already held, caused him to be sent by the clergy and people to the Emperor, to ask help against their false pastor; and he fulfilled his mission so well, that shortly afterwards the hireling, for he was no longer a shepherd, was deservedly deposed and excommunicated. Canisius was sent at the age of twenty-six, as a distinguished theologian, to assist at the Council of Trent, and afterwards summoned to Rome by St. Ignatius. At the altar of the Apostles Peter and Paul, he was professed as a member of the Society of Jesus in the presence of its holy founder, and here he ardently besought of God the grace to live and die for the spiritual welfare of his native land. Thither he returned in the year 1550, and there for thirty years carried on a most efficacious ministry.

To form an idea of his labours, we should have to accompany him on his journeys, and witness his fatigues and sufferings, as well as his battles and his victories. We first find him in Bavaria. He quickly won the admiration of all as professor of theology in Ingoldstadt, and was elected rector of the university. Through his means, an interest in theological science was revived among the students, and the sacred calling of the priesthood came to be held in high honour. His sermons terrified the most hardened sinners, awoke the slumbering faith of the people, and kindled in all hearts a zeal for religion. On account of the veneration he everywhere inspired, the Emperor Ferdinand, placing confidence in him in a case which seemed almost desperate, summoned him to Vienna. Here there was indeed enough to cause him sorrow in the many and deep wounds which the heretics had inflicted on religion. He found the people demoralised, the clergy degraded, God's worship neglected, and most of the towns deprived of their pastors. The once flourishing university had not for twenty years produced a single priest, and there were three hundred parishes without pastors in the territory then belonging to Austria. Canisius strove with his whole might, by word and

example, to combat these evils. His first care was to re-introduce orthodox teaching into the higher schools, and to secure that their authorities should be men of approved faith. But neither did he forget the poor country people. When he learnt how that, far and wide in the country about Vienna, most of the villages were deprived of all spiritual aid, he set forth himself, and made toilsome journeys from place to place, preaching, instructing, and administering the sacraments. And the poor people thanked God with tears of joy, for His mercy in sending to them, as they said, this angel from heaven. From Vienna, Canisius was sent by the Emperor to Bohemia, where religion was attacked by foes still fiercer and more powerful. But nothing could shake the courage of God's servant. The heretics raged against him, insulted him, and pelted him with stones; but in vain. The power of his preaching, his patience, gentleness, and charity, in the end disarmed their wrath, and led back a great part of the people into the bosom of the Church. In Poland also a fierce battle awaited him with the enemies of the faith. Here too, his words restored the drooping courage of the weak, put the arrogance of the heretics to shame, wrought in King Sigismund a zealous determination to protect the rights of the Church, and thus prepared the way for her ultimate triumph. Much more might yet be said of his long years of labour in Bavaria, Austria, Franconia, Swabia, Alsace, and Breisgau; of the important and difficult missions intrusted to him by the popes, and of the share which, as a distinguished theologian, he was repeatedly called on to take in the deliberations of the Council of Trent; and much too, of the many colleges which he founded in Germany, whereby not only were the fruits of his own labour multiplied, but solid support was provided for religion, and blessings laid up for future centuries. It is impossible to witness without astonishment the labours of this one man, whom we meet with, now at Diets as the councillor of Catholic princes,—now at religious conferences, confuting error with truth,—journeying to and fro to Rome, sent hither and thither in the service

of the Church, ever devoting himself as teacher and confessor to the salvation of souls; and in spite of all, finding time to produce voluminous writings in defence of the faith. Amongst these, besides many larger works, may be mentioned his well-known catechism, or "Abstract of Christian Doctrine," which has served in Germany ever since his time as a text-book for instruction in schools and churches. We cannot wonder at the veneration in which Canisius was held by all the greatest men of his time, and which caused him to be named "the pillar of the Northern Church" and the "Xavier of the West." His enemies too, paid him tribute of the highest possible praise, saying, as Protestants bear witness, that had it not been for him, all the south of Germany would have ceased to be Catholic. The latter years of his life were spent by Canisius at Freiburg in Switzerland. Even to extreme old age he continued his apostolic labours, and at last, December 21, 1597, closed his active and holy life by an equally holy death.

"The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were adorned also by the holy lives of St. John of God, St. John of the Cross, St. Thomas of Villanova, St. Philip Neri, St. Cajetan, St. Peter of Alcantara, St. Camillus of Lellis, St. Joseph Calasanctius, St. Joseph of Cupertino, St. Francis Borgia, St. Pius V., St. Aloysius Gonzaga, St. Stanislaus Kostka, and many others."

The foregoing examples testify sufficiently to the divine life which fills the Church, and which is able so to penetrate, sanctify, and raise to the most wonderful degree of supernatural holiness, such as faithfully devote themselves to her service. And this is still further proved by the lives of the many other saints whom we also meet with about this time.

In Spain, St. John of God, urged by the fire of divine charity, devoted himself entirely to the welfare of his suffering fellow-creatures. He spent the day in attendance on the sick, and in the evening went through the streets collecting alms, and carrying those who were helpless from illness on his shoulders to the hospital. Once, when the hospital was on fire, he went through the midst of the flames and carried out the sick. He was passing to and fro for half an hour through the burning building, but was miraculously preserved from injury and brought out not only the sick, but their beds also in safety. His disciples who had assisted him during his life in the care of the sick, and who zealously imitated his example,

formed themselves after his death, in 1550, into a religious community which, under the name of "The Brothers of Mercy," has spread from Spain into Italy, Germany, France, and America. A little later, in Old Castile, the life of St. John of the Cross gave a bright example of the most unsullied innocence united with the sternest mortification. From the time he was ten years old, to suffer for the love of Jesus had been his greatest joy, and that he might do so was the grace for which he prayed. Once our Lord appeared to him and asked him what reward he desired for his labours, and he answered, "Lord, to suffer and be despised for Thy sake." In union with St. Theresa, he undertook the reformation of the ancient and venerable order of Mount Carmel, and accomplished the task in spite of all difficulties and opposition.

About this time also St. Joseph Calasanctius was born in Aragon. After having received holy orders, and filled several important offices with great zeal, God's Providence called him to Rome. Here he founded a company of priests for the establishment of religious schools, (*piarum scholarum*, whence their name of Piarists) a holy institution of which the good results spread far and wide throughout the world. For fifty-two years he remained, in spite of struggles and opposition, the tender and loving friend of children, and refused the dignities of bishop and cardinal that he might devote himself undisturbed to Christ's little ones.

Philip Neri was born in Florence in 1515, and glorified Rome by his wonderful life of active holiness. His work there wrought such beneficial results in the capital of Christendom, that he is to this day honoured as its apostle. Once, when on the vigil of Pentecost, he was fervently praying for the gifts of the Holy Ghost, his petition received a miraculous answer. He felt himself suddenly filled as though with fire, so that he sank on the ground and was forced to tear open his clothes to cool himself. Since then his breast, just over his heart, protruded markedly, and after his death two of his left ribs were found to have been broken and spread apart in such a manner that, according to the testimony of two of the most celebrated doctors of the time, life could not possibly have been continued in any natural way. He lived, nevertheless, for fifty years after this miraculous visitation in one continued course of unbroken activity. His zeal for the salvation of souls caused him to found a congregation which assisted him in his spiritual labours and in the care of the poor and sick. The members of this congregation received the name of Oratorians, from the oratory of the Church of San Girolamo, where they were used to meet for prayer in common; and it is to be distinguished from another of the same name founded in France by Cardinal de Bérulle.

St. Cajetan was born at Vicenza, in Lombardy, of a noble family ; his zeal for men's salvation was so great that he came to be called the "hunter of souls." Together with John Peter Caraffa, Bishop of Theate, and afterwards Pope Paul IV., he instituted the Theatine Order for the care of souls and the exercise of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

St. Peter of Alcantara led a most wonderful life of penance. He was born in 1499 of noble parents in the Spanish province of Estremadura. He entered the Franciscan Order and imitated with heroic courage the poor and austere life of its holy founder. His example having kindled in others a like zeal for penance, God chose him to found an especially strict congregation of Franciscans which was approved by the Church.

St. Camillus of Lellis was born about the middle of the sixteenth century, in the kingdom of Naples, and God called him by means of bodily sufferings from the tumult of the world. He served the sick for some years in the hospital of San Giacomo in Rome, and whilst there, took the resolution of forming the pious congregation of the "Servants of the Sick." Its members added a fourth vow to the three usual ones,—to be always ready, namely, to attend the plague-stricken.

St. Thomas of Villanova was a contemporary of Luther and a member of the same order. He was both a distinguished theologian and a most tender father of the poor. When he was Archbishop of Valencia no house could be more poorly furnished than his palace there, and shortly before his death he gave away the bed on which he lay, in order that he might die in complete poverty.

St. Joseph of Cupertino was born in the kingdom of Naples at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and later entered the Franciscan Order. Through his deep humility he obtained the most extraordinary favours from Heaven. When the blessed sacrament was exposed for adoration, he was at times seen by all the people raised high in the air before it in an attitude of profound devotion. The Protestant Duke, John Frederick of Brunswick, had once, during his travels in Italy, the opportunity of being present at the saint's mass, and was so moved by a miracle of this kind which he then witnessed, that he abjured heresy and embraced the Catholic faith.

St. Pius V. was a Dominican. After being called to the Papacy, he distinguished himself by his zeal for the discipline of the Church, for the diffusion of the faith, and for his charity towards the poor and suffering. It is to him that Christendom owes the great victory of Lepanto over its hereditary enemy, the Turk. He united his own forces with those of Spain and Venice to oppose the overwhelming might of Selim II. ; presented a consecrated banner to Don John of Austria, the leader of the Christian

fleet, and himself blessed the ships before their departure. The Christian host, small in proportion to that of its enemy, gained a sudden and complete victory. On the day of the battle its result was supernaturally made known to Pius, who was then holding a consistory of cardinals, and he immediately invited all present to come and give thanks for the victory.

St. Francis Borgia, formerly Viceroy of Catalonia, Duke of Gandia, and trusted friend of Charles V., astonished all Spain by his humility and self-abnegation, when he suddenly descended from the pinnacle of earthly greatness to imitate the poverty of the life of our Lord. Renouncing his dignities, and stripped of all his possessions, he entered the Society of Jesus, and there set a wonderful example of mortification, piety, and devotion to our Lord in the most holy sacrament of the altar. He rendered great services to the Church, and died in 1572, the third General of his order.

St. Aloysius, that angel in human form whose spotless innocence was only equalled by his zeal for penance, has been constituted by the Church as the special patron of youth. Born of the princely house of Gonzaga, and heir to his father's dominions, he yet regarded earthly splendour as nothing, and was poor in spirit but rich towards God. Grace soon called him out of the world and led him into the Society of Jesus. Not with generosity only, but with the greatest possible joy, he gave up all his possessions and entered with rapture the poor-house of the order in Rome. He was called from earth to his real home, the abode of eternal peace, at the age of twenty-four, dying, a martyr of charity, of an illness caught while attending on the plague-stricken. His glory in heaven was once revealed by God to St. Mary Magdalene of the Pazzi, insomuch that she exclaimed in amazement, "Oh what glory Aloysius possesses! I could never have believed it if my Saviour had not shown it to me. It almost seems to me as though there is no greater glory in heaven than that of Aloysius! Could I but go through the whole world, and tell all how God is glorified in him!"

Together with St. Aloysius may be worthily mentioned the names of St. Stanislaus Kostka, a noble Polish youth, and blessed John Berchmans, a Belgian, who both entered the Society of Jesus in Rome, and, after blooming awhile like lilies in God's garden on earth, were early called to their home in heaven.

"Among the female saints of this time we may mention particularly St. Theresa, St. Rose of Lima, St. Angela of Brescia, St. Mary Magdalene of the Pazzi, St. Jane Frances de Chantal, and St. Catherine of Ricci."

Many women also at this time were conspicuous as examples of the most exalted virtue, and of truly angelic holiness and love of

God. St. Theresa of Jesus, who later entered the order of Carmelites, was born in 1515 at Avila in Castile, and was brought, through great trial and suffering, to such a height of virtue, that she bound herself by vow to make it the rule of her life always in her conduct to choose what was most perfect. Besides many other extraordinary graces, she received the most wonderful one, that her heart was pierced through by an angel with a burning arrow (and this not symbolically, but actually), and from thenceforth glowed with the most seraphic love towards God. Through her own heroic zeal, and aided by St. Joseph, to whom she had always a most special devotion, she accomplished in spite of all difficulties the reform of her order; and, though destitute of all human help, and greatly opposed by worldly princes, succeeded in founding before her death thirty-two convents of her reform. Her writings, which are so highly esteemed to this day by theologians, and in which she enlarges with wonderful depth and clearness on the hidden ways of perfection, testify to the divine wisdom with which her soul was filled.

Worthy to compare with St. Theresa in holiness, is another member of the same order, St. Mary Magdalene of the Pazzi. She was born in 1566 of a noble Florentine house, and her life was most wonderful for its angelic purity and innocence. From her cradle she had followed the path of perfection. At ten years old she consecrated her virginity to God, and all through her life never knew the least approach of anything contrary to holy purity. She was a chosen vessel of divine grace, and filled with the most ardent love towards God. This love moved her to entreat that, provided she did not thereby lose God's grace, she might be deprived of all sensible consolation, and suffer all the pains of hell, if so by this voluntary offering of herself she might save souls from eternal destruction.

Shortly before her time, St. Catherine Ricci (born, 1522) had also glorified Florence by her holy life. From her earliest childhood the Passion of our Lord had entirely engrossed her heart, and she could hardly bear to desist from its contemplation. Her life as a Dominican nun was one of continual self-oblation. Not only did she inflict on herself the severest bodily penances, and seek by the offering of these and by fervent prayer to atone for the sins of others, but with heroic charity she took upon herself the pains of the souls in purgatory, and was permitted by God at certain times to share in a wonderful manner in the sufferings of our Lord Himself.

St. Angela of Merici was born in Northern Italy. From her earliest youth she most carefully guarded her innocence by retirement and penance, that she might offer herself unsullied to her Heavenly Bridegroom. She is the foundress of the famous order

of Ursulines, so called because placed by her under the patronage of St. Ursula, the unconquered leader of an army of heroic virgins.

Conspicuous among the holy souls who have followed unerringly the way of perfection in the midst of all life's various relationships, is St. Jane Frances Fremiot de Chantal, who was born in 1572 of an honourable family in Dijon. She served God faithfully, both whilst unmarried and as a wife, and was called by Him after her husband's death to a higher work. Providence so ordered it that she had for her director St. Francis de Sales, who, notwithstanding the many and anxious duties of his office, undertook the guidance of this most highly-favoured soul, which he led with the greatest care and prudence along the path of perfection which God had marked out for it. He soon discovered in this courageous servant of God qualities which fitted her for being the foundress of the order of the Visitation. Frances, who had learned by divine revelation her vocation to the religious life, on her part generously renounced the world, hard as was the sacrifice which called on her to separate herself from her young son and her aged and tenderly loved father. But God had called her, and she obeyed Him at all costs. At her death the order reckoned in various countries eighty-seven houses.

The New World had but too soon become to the nations of Europe an arena for the display of men's evil passions, and here it was, that in St. Rose of Lima, God chose for Himself a pure and holy soul, who by the ardour of her love and the rigour of the penances which she undertook in obedience to His will, should make atonement for the sins of others. To her self-inflicted sufferings, God added painful sicknesses and a long and terrible desolation of spirit. But in this sea of trials she prayed only, "Lord, do Thou increase, not my sufferings only, but also my love towards Thee."

It is but a small number of the many saints by whose lives the Church was glorified, at the time of, or immediately after, the Reformation that we can here mention. Space would not allow of our giving even the names of those whom the Church has held up to public honour by her sentence of beatification or canonisation. These were for the most part Italians or Spaniards by birth; a fact which shows us that it was chiefly in those lands which had remained uninfected by the pestilential breath of heresy that the most glorious fruits of Christian faith were brought forth. And besides the many whom the Church holds up for the veneration of the faithful, there were countless others whose lives and deaths bore unquestionable witness to the very highest sanctity. Of these, many in the midst of the world led lives of the most com-

plete mortification and detachment; many turned their backs on riches and honours, and chose poverty in the religious state; many, some in their own countries, and some among wild and barbarous nations, devoted themselves, by works of charity and zeal for souls, to the welfare of their neighbour; and many also died gloriously as martyrs.

“St. Alphonsus Liguori (died 1787) was one of the chief ornaments of the Catholic Church in the eighteenth century. He was Bishop of St. Agatha, near Naples, and founded the missionary order of Redemptorists, or, as it is also called, ‘the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.’”

Conspicuous amongst the many holy men whose virtues adorned the Church during the last century, is St. Alphonsus Liguori (born 1696). He had distinguished himself in his studies, and had already begun to practise with success as an advocate, when he resolved upon renouncing, once for all, the fame promised him by a deceitful world. Like St. Ignatius, he hung his sword on the altar of Our Lady, and desired henceforth to devote himself as a priest to God’s service and the salvation of souls. He nobly fulfilled his purpose, devoting his whole strength to the labours of his new vocation. He journeyed unweariedly from place to place, eager to supply the spiritual wants of the people, to instruct them in their duties, to root out vice, and to extend the love of holiness and virtue. Being, as he was, a man entirely dead to himself, and burning with the love of Jesus and Mary, graces were poured forth upon him without measure, and the most abandoned sinners were converted by his sermons. His untiring zeal for souls caused him to spend all the time he could spare, in the writing of useful books. And the good which he thus did and still continues to do is well known. His works on moral theology have made him to our own day a recognised guide for confessors; whilst by his devotional writings he is still an apostle of the faithful. Another fruit of his zeal for men’s salvation was the “Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer,” which he founded, and which has for its object the supplying of the spiritual needs of the poor by means of frequent missions. Its mem-

bers have worthily striven to imitate the virtues of their holy founder, and have won the gratitude of all good men by the services which they have rendered to the Church. St. Alphonsus was Superior of the congregation for thirty years. He had constantly refused all the ecclesiastical dignities offered to him, until at last, in 1762, Clement XIII. commanded him to accept the see of St. Agatha. He then obeyed, and fulfilled with the most complete fidelity the duties of his office. In his extreme old age however, he longed greatly to be freed from its responsibilities, and Pope Pius VI. at length granted his entreaties. He left his palace, poor as he had entered it, and humbly requested admission into one of the houses of his congregation. He reached the great age of ninety, and even the last years of his life, bowed down though he was by infirmities and sickness, were employed continually in labour for the good of souls. He set indeed a most wonderful example of constant diligence, insomuch that he actually bound himself by a vow never to let an hour pass unemployed. His sanctity was attested by God after his death by many miracles, and he was therefore solemnly canonised by Gregory XVI. on Trinity Sunday, 1839.

“The great deeds which all these saints performed, and the countless miracles wrought by their intercession, are proofs that the true spirit of Christianity—the spirit of charity, humility, and mortification—has not departed from the Church, as her enemies so often blindly maintain.”

The glorious host of saints with which God has adorned the Church in these latter days, bears witness incontestably to the truth of our holy religion. These saints are true images of Jesus Christ, and in their lives we see again the lives of the first Christians and of the apostles. The works which they did, the exalted virtues that they practised, loudly declare the faith that they followed to be the true faith, and the sacraments that they frequented the means of grace instituted by God. But this faith of theirs, for which they would have desired to shed their blood to the last drop, was the holy Catholic faith; it was from those sources which

the Catholic Church provides, that they drew their spiritual life; and that Church too, was the mother to whom they all clung with filial obedience and love. Yes! all these saints were the children of the Catholic Church, and, as her children, all clearly witness, that she is herself the bride of Christ and the mother of His chosen.

One witness for the truth of the Catholic faith is the holiness of the lives of so many of its confessors. And to this witness God has added another, in the wonderful miracles which He works, after the departure of His saints out of this world, in behalf of those who in time of need, invoke them with piety and confidence; and when such marvels are shown to be, not due to imagination only, but to be actual and indisputable facts, even unbelievers are forced to be silent in presence of such a confirmation of the faith. Now, all such miracles as the Church accepts as evidence, in the canonisation of a saint, are carefully examined, and thoroughly well attested facts. That this is the case no one who is acquainted with the Acts of the Processes of Canonisation will call in question. Of the numberless miracles which might be adduced, it may here suffice to mention two, as examples, both taken from the Processes of the Canonisation of St. Francis of Sales.

On the 30th of April 1623, Jerome Genin and his brother, two boys of about thirteen, were walking together along the bank of a river. Jerome suddenly fell in, and called, as he did so, on St. Francis de Sales. He was taken out after some time, dead and much disfigured. The parish priest, with whom the boys were living as pupils, made a vow that if Jerome's life should be restored, he would say mass for nine following days in the church of the Visitation at Annecy, where St. Francis was buried. Meanwhile prayers were said all through the night beside the corpse, in which decomposition had already set in to such an extent that the smell it emitted was almost unbearable. In the morning preparations were made for the funeral, and psalms sung according to the usual custom. Suddenly, to the astonishment of all present, the boy stretched out his arms and cried, "O blessed St. Francis de Sales!" The priest drew near, and the boy, who had now been dead twenty-six hours, said, in a steady voice, "The blessed Francis de Sales has awakened me." He then rose, dressed himself, and showed himself full of strength and life. He felt some pains still from the bruises he had received, but he had no sooner prayed at the saint's tomb at Annecy than these completely left him. The boy himself certified at the official inquiry into this miracle, that, at the moment in which he came to himself, the servant of God, dressed in his episcopal robes, looked

at him kindly with a shining countenance and gave him his blessing. Equally wonderful is the cure of Claudius Marmoz, who was born blind. According to the declaration of several doctors, he had no trace at all of human eyes, but in their place only two white membranes without the slightest appearance of a pupil. In 1625, when he was seven years old, his parents brought him to the tomb of St. Francis de Sales and there made a novena for him. When, on the ninth day, his eyesockets were applied to the tomb, the child suddenly exclaimed, "O my God! I see. I think I must be in heaven!" On being examined he was found to have pupils as distinct and perfect as possible. With the accounts of these miracles, the names of the persons on whom they were wrought, and of the witnesses who solemnly swore to them, together with the places and dates, are exactly recorded, so that inquiry concerning them should be open to all. Is it possible to suspect imposition under such circumstances?¹

What else do these miracles prove, if not that God delights to honour His saints, and wills to set them as examples of virtue before the faithful, for imitation and veneration? In them a warning voice perpetually calls to us, as if from God, to be true children of the Church as they were, if we would desire one day to share their glory. What, we may well ask, are the grounds upon which heretics support their opposition to, and obstinate rejection

¹ These miracles are given circumstantially in the history of the canonisation of St. Francis de Sales, by the Abbé Baudry (Migne, "*Œuvres Complètes de St. François de Sales*," tom. i.). Along with them is also given another instance of the raising of a dead body at the intercession of this saint, which was also brought forward during the processes of his canonisation, and which took place at Annecy on the 28th of April 1623. A little girl of eight years old, named Françoise Angelique de la Pesse, whilst crossing a brook on a narrow plank missed her footing and fell in. More than three hours passed before the body was recovered, it having become entangled at the bottom of the stream twenty feet below the surface of the water. When taken out it was much swollen, and the face disfigured and covered with bluish blotches. The doctors who were called in pronounced life to be quite extinct; no means, therefore, were taken to restore it, and the body was laid out on a bed and covered with a cloth. The mother, however, did not lose hope, but, throwing herself on her knees, prayed without ceasing, "O glorious Francis of Sales, my daughter! I vow thee a golden heart if she is given back to me." More than an hour and a half had passed since the corpse had been brought to the house, when the child suddenly opened her eyes and clasped her hands. Several persons who were standing about the bed exclaimed, "A miracle! a miracle!" The face, however, still remained swollen and livid as before. The mother now knelt again beside the bed and repeated her vow, and at that same moment all swelling and deformity vanished, the complexion became fair as before, and the child was completely restored to health.

of, the Church? There may have been, and even yet may still be, scandals within her—how can it be otherwise whilst she contains, besides the divine element, the fallible human element also?—but the Holy Spirit is ever with her, and manifests His presence by bringing forth in her, from among a sinful race, the holiest lives and most wonderful fruits of grace. Let any one, honestly, and with an unprejudiced mind, interrogate history, and he will find himself forced to accept the verdict lately pronounced by a Protestant historian, “that it is not the Church that has sinned, but the Church that has been sinned against.”

SECTION XLVII.

THE SECTS—THE ENGLISH FREETHINKERS—FREEMASONRY—PHILOSOPHY IN FRANCE—OPPRESSION OF RELIGIOUS ORDERS, NOTABLY OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS—THE FRENCH REVOLUTION—ABOLITION OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP—CULTUS OF REASON—REGICIDE—BLOODY MASSACRES—RESTORATION OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP BY NAPOLEON—HIS TYRANNY AND FALL.

“Terrible events, such as the mind shrinks from contemplating, yet remain for us to record, which, were it not for the high instruction for us of which they are full, we would willingly pass over in silence. Luther’s teaching met the fate of all things human: it grew old and became metamorphosed into different shapes. One sect after another came into being:—Anabaptists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Quakers, Methodists, Herrnhuters; each after Luther’s example, undertaking to amend the faith of its predecessors. And then, at last, arrogant minds arose, first in England and then in France, who conceived the idea of abolishing religion altogether and utterly destroying the faith of Christ. Under the pretext of enlightening mankind, they poured forth voluminous writings, in which everything holy was ridiculed, the pope and clergy grossly slandered, and flagrant immorality shamelessly inculcated. Such teaching, put forth as it was with every recommendation of eloquence and wit, found but too much favour with men of all ranks, and the spirit of profligacy and impiety spread itself with fearful rapidity.”

THE innovators of the sixteenth century, in formulating as a principle the right of the free interpretation of Scripture, had been preparing the way for their own destruction. They soon found this out, and endeavoured to stem the rising tide of dissolution by the drawing up of so-called Symbols or Confessions of Faith, the accept-

ance of which was then imposed by law upon their followers. An almost incredible degree of religious tyranny was thus exercised in many countries, which however succeeded so far, that by its means external unity was for some time preserved. But the unnatural and vexatious character of such laws soon made itself felt, and many eyes were turned towards the Catholic Church. During the seventeenth century several eminent men made proposals for reunion with her, but they were all brought to nothing by the seemingly hard necessity of submission to her authority.

The various national Churches failed to satisfy many of the more pious and intelligent, whilst in others a taste for change called forth fresh attempts at remodelling existing forms. Thus sect after sect started up, so that Germany, England, and North America literally swarmed with them. All, of course, professed themselves to be founded upon the Bible, and their consequent disputes with each other over the true meaning of Scripture were endless. So early as the latter half of the sixteenth century Socinus had founded a sect in Poland, which went so far as to deny the divinity of Christ and the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. In England, in the middle of the seventeenth century, a shoemaker named George Fox gave himself out for a prophet, set aside the sacraments, and maintained that there dwelt in all men, heathens, Jews, and Christians alike, an inner light sufficient in itself to lead them to blessedness. His adherents refuse to serve in the army as soldiers, to take oaths in courts of justice, or to pay tithes, and affect a fantastic precision of demeanour. They have received the name of "Quakers," because during their devotional exercises the divine inspiration was held to manifest itself in them by means of tremblings and convulsions. In the year 1722 Count Nicholas von Zinzendorf founded a peculiar sect in Lusatia, whose members were named Herrnhuters, from the newly-built town of Herrnhut. Religion, as he understood it, was limited solely to the doctrine of the Atonement, and he taught what went by the name of the "Cross and blood theology." The heterogeneous elements of which his followers were composed were united together by an apparently well-organised system. In later times the spirit of commerce seems to have usurped, in some measure, the place of the original religious enthusiasm. It was from his knowledge of this sect that John Wesley was led to found at Oxford a sort of society of pious men, whose members, owing to their regular lives and somewhat formal manners, received the name of "Methodists." Conversion was held by them to be an instantaneous change of condition, which completely destroyed the dominion of the flesh, and freed from sin all those in whom it was brought about. The sect of "Jumpers" was an offset from the Methodists. These last were so called, because they believed that interior illumi-

nation showed itself in them by spasmodic leaps and contortions. In 1743 the Church of the New Jerusalem was founded by Swedenborg. He believed himself to be favoured with visions and divine inspirations, and to be in communication with spirits and the souls of the departed, by whom he was instructed in all things earthly and heavenly; and, moreover, that he had several times visited both paradise and hell. According to his teaching, the Godhead consisted of but one person; angels and devils were both of human origin; Christ had manifested to us the meaning of the Scriptures, but had not made atonement for our sins; and Baptism and Communion were pious usages only.

Numberless other sects also arose. These aimless differences and constant struggles produced hatred and disunion; and the frequent changes of religion which were not unfrequently enjoined by the State deprived Christianity in the eyes of many of its supernatural character. The Catholic Church too, was decried and calumniated, and boldly denounced as a synagogue of Satan and the kingdom of Antichrist, so that none dared to turn to her for truth, or even to examine into her teaching. Those therefore, who knew and judged Christianity merely from the miserable caricature of it presented by the sects, made it answerable for all the follies and excesses which were in reality the offspring of heresy, and turned from it in disgust. This result of the sectarian spirit showed itself first in England, where that spirit had most completely prevailed. So early as the seventeenth century a party had formed itself there which avowedly rejected the Christian revelation, and confined itself to what it named the religion of reason. The followers of this religion did indeed at first admit that, to attain eternal happiness, men should believe in God, honour Him by the practice of virtue, repent of their sins, and look for the future reward of the good and the punishment of the bad. This however did not last long; they soon found it pleasanter to cast aside the restraints of religion altogether; and having, as they imagined, raised themselves through free inquiry above a set of obsolete superstitions, they proceeded to represent, as the outcome of the teaching of pure reason, those two most unreasonable inventions of

the human brain, Atheism namely, and Materialism. In the beginning of the eighteenth century a leading representative of this system explained that there exists no personal God, no liberty of will, no immortality, and neither virtue nor vice. This Antichristian teaching was propagated not by writings only, but also by means of a secret society, whose members were bound to work together for this one end. This was the object for the promotion of which the first Freemasons' lodge was founded in London in the year 1717. The work which this association had set before it was no less than the superseding of the religion which the Son of God had instituted for men's salvation, by a society, (or, in the language of the initiated, an Edifice or Temple) whose own members first, and then by degrees the whole world, were to be formed into "the one true Church of mankind"—a Church which was to recognise no revelation whatever, but simply those first principles of reason in which it was assumed all mankind would agree, and which was therefore to unite all men within itself without distinction of creed.

In France many unhappy circumstances combined to favour the development of the poisonous seed which was introduced both by books and by contact with the Freemasons. The Jansenists, whose errors had been condemned by the Pope, did as much harm by their resistance to ecclesiastical authority, as by their excessive strictness in the administration of the sacraments. But the most powerful engine then at work for the undermining of religion, was the evil band of philosophers, who, aided by the bad example of the court and many of the aristocracy, first loosened the people's hold on virtue and morality, then estranged them from the Church, and then introduced among them the poisonous doctrines of the Revolution. During the reign of Louis XIV. (from 1643-1715), the spectacle presented by the manners of the court and the nobility had formed no school of virtue for the people. The frivolous tone, which had become first prevalent among the higher ranks, spread itself in wider and

wider circles; and the wits of the day strove in their writings to represent vice as merely an amiable weakness. The state of things became yet worse under the regency of the licentious Duke of Orleans (from 1715-1723). The court of this prince was composed of the most abandoned reprobates, and was the scene of the wildest orgies and the most unrestrained license of speech and behaviour. Conscience had come to be counted but as a childish superstition, religion was held to be only priestcraft, and the immortality of the soul an old wife's fable. Things were no better during the long reign of Louis XV. Weak and depraved, this king was entirely governed by his mistresses, and lavished immense sums on vicious favourites. From Paris and the castles of the aristocracy, vice and immorality spread downwards amongst the people of every rank. And the way to success was thus made ready for that party which had for its aim the overthrow of Church and State. At the head of this party, about the middle of the eighteenth century, stood Voltaire, a man in whom ambition, malice, hypocrisy, and vice, were united with brilliant eloquence and the most dazzling powers of wit and satire. He it was who gave formal shape to the conspiracy against Christianity, and directed against it all the scattered forces at his command. Like a skilful general, he kept all classes of men in view, and succeeded in introducing unbelief even among the common people. His chief accomplices were D'Alembert, whose advice was always for a covert attack upon religion; Diderot, who openly denied the existence of the Deity; and Damilaville, whom Voltaire describes as "a hater of God." Voltaire was unceasingly urging his followers to use every means to crush "l'Infame," as he called the Catholic Church. "Five or six intelligent men," he used to say, "should be amply sufficient to overthrow a religion which was smuggled into existence by twelve stupid ones." The confederates were indeed wonderfully active in pursuit of their object. A flood of impious literature was produced, in which, under misleading phrases, all things holy and venerable were

dragged through the mire. In so doing the utmost malice and ingenuity were employed. It was pretended that abuses only were being attacked; the sacredness of human life was ostentatiously advocated, and the guilt of former bloodshed thrown upon priests and kings; the prejudices of the people were flattered adroitly, and meanwhile all religion was held up to contempt. The battle-cries chosen by this party were such words as "Reason, Liberty, Equality, Humanity, Fraternity!" Not content with the squibs and lampoons which they had already scattered broadcast in all directions, the champions of progress resolved to produce one great work which should shed forth the new light in streams over the whole world. This was the celebrated "*Encyclopædia*"—a dictionary of universal knowledge—whose aim, the overthrow of the altar and the throne, was made obvious in its treatment of the various subjects. The existing order in Church and State was in one place held up to ridicule, and in another loaded with obloquy. Here the highest truths were called in question; there, flatly denied. History was misrepresented and perverted; and the godless principles of the so-called Religion of Nature—that is to say, Materialism and Atheism—were by turns openly and covertly preached. The design succeeded but too well. Soon fear of vice and reverence for religion came to be accounted signs of a feeble mind, whilst debauchees and atheists were, on the contrary, held to be men of spirit. The philosophers already rejoiced as they looked forward to their triumph. "Everything I see," wrote Voltaire to a friend of his, "teems with the germs of revolution; and a revolution will certainly come, though I cannot myself hope for the happiness of witnessing it. The light is now so spread abroad that men will seize the first opportunity of breaking loose, and then what a noise there will be! Our young folks are in luck; they will see fine things!" The applause due to him as a patriarch of unbelievers was freely given by his admirers. In the August of 1790, when France had already groaned for a year under the Reign of

Terror, and streams of innocent blood had been shed, a writer in the "Mercure Français" speaks thus: "Mankind owes eternal gratitude to Voltaire. He has not seen all that he did, but he has done all that we see. Enlightened historians will declare him to be, without doubt, the prime originator of this great revolution which has thrown all Europe into amazement, and which has everywhere inspired the people with joyful hope and the courts with anxiety and fear. He it was who first destroyed that greatest and most fearful bulwark of tyranny, *religious and sacerdotal power*. Had he not broken the yoke of the priests, that of the tyrants could never have been shaken off." It must however, in justice be allowed, that a large share in the overthrow of religion is due to the writings of Rousseau, in which the poisonous doctrines of unbelief are rendered yet more fatal by being artfully wrapt in a veil of false sentimentality.

Good men however there were, who recognised the danger, trembled at its magnitude, and did their best to arouse the faithful to a sense of their peril, lest the foe should surprise them unarmed. Long before the outbreak of the Revolution, the Jesuit De Neuville, who died in 1774 of grief for the suppression of his order, exclaimed in a sermon in which he was describing the impiety of the new philosophy, "O holy religion! O throne of our kings! O France! O my people! Not only as a Christian, but as a citizen, must I weep and sigh over the outrage that is offered you, and over the sad fate which is preparing for you. These fearful doctrines will increase, will spread and take root, and their consuming poison cannot then fail to undermine the very foundations of the State. All things in this fair country will sink down, crushed and destroyed; and for such a destruction God needs not to set in motion His thunder and His lightning. Heaven can safely leave to earth the task of avenging her Creator and punishing herself. Torn in pieces by the unthinking madness of the nation, the State will fall into the abyss of ruin." In 1775 too, a well-known preacher, the ex-Jesuit Beauregard, raised his voice in Notre Dame with prophetic solemnity. "Yes," he cried, "it is the king and religion, at which the philosophers are aiming to destroy them. The axe and hammer are in their hands, and they do but await a fitting opportunity to overturn both throne and altar. Yes Lord, Thy temples will be robbed and destroyed, Thy feasts abolished, Thy name blasphemed, and Thy service despised. O Great God! what

do I hear? what do I see? Instead of the sacred hymns with which these venerable walls were wont to echo, obscene songs resound. And thou, shameless Venus, infamous goddess of Paganism, thou hast come hither also to take the place of the living God, to seat thyself on the throne of the Most High, and receive the filthy incense of thy new adorers!" But voices such as these sounded in vain, and the doomed nation rushed swiftly along the way of destruction marked out for it.

"The enemies of God now found themselves strong enough to put their designs into execution. They first attacked the priesthood, in order that the shepherds being stricken they might the more easily slay the flock. Towards the end of the eighteenth century the Church property in France was seized on and sold, monks and nuns were forcibly driven from their peaceful homes, and the religious houses were plundered and destroyed. A bloodthirsty edict was before long passed against all priests who remained faithful to their office. Wherever such were found they were thrown into prison, or else hung without further ceremony to the nearest lamp-post."

God's enemies judged rightly, that to accomplish the overthrow of the Church the first attack would have to be made upon the clergy, and in particular on the religious orders. Frederick II., King of Prussia, who was on terms of close alliance with the philosophical party in France, recommended this policy to Voltaire, and pointed out to him how it might be best executed. "When," he wrote, "those asylums of fanaticism, the monasteries, are done away with, the zeal of the people will gradually cool, and the rest of the clergy, and even the bishops, may be attacked with good effect; for these when unprotected by the religious orders are but babes on whom kings may trample at their pleasure."

The first step to be taken for this purpose was to represent to government that the dissolution of the wealthy monasteries was the only means of paying off the enormous national debt; "the bait," as Frederick added, "offered by rich abbeys and well-endowed convents being irresistible." Before all things the desire of the infidel party was to get rid of the Order of the Jesuits. So long as it remained, their designs, they knew, could not take effect; and for this reason,—that almost throughout all Christendom the education of the young lay

entirely in their hands; and of whatever class of men this can be said, it can be also said that the coming generation is in their hands also. Therefore it was that d'Alembert wrote to Voltaire: "Should the Jesuits this year die a violent death, I should look the next year to see toleration established, the priests married, confession abolished, and all fanaticism utterly destroyed, before any one had time to see what was going on." So Voltaire himself too writes in 1761 to the infamous Helvetius: "Had we but got rid of the Jesuits, we should have an easy game with 'l'infame' (the wretch!)"¹

The poisoned arrows of satire and calumny were let fly by thousands at the Society of Jesus; and besides numberless pamphlets against them, whose writers were well paid, the most filthy pictures and engravings were circulated among the people. In this work the philosophers received aid from the Jansenists, who had found in the Jesuits the most vigorous opponents of their heretical teaching.

The persecution was first started in the truly Catholic country of Portugal, and it was from thence that the signal was given for its commencement in other lands. Carvalho, Marquis of Pombal, the Portuguese minister, was a man who recoiled from no crime in pursuit of ambition and revenge. His tyrannical rule kept the whole nation in misery, and he caused more than nine thousand men, many of them of high family, to waste away their lives in cruel captivity; for no means came amiss to him when he had an end to gain. When, in 1750, Portugal obtained by exchange, some of the Spanish possessions in Paraguay, he succeeded in tearing the Jesuit missionaries in the most barbarous manner from their Indian converts, by whom they were tenderly loved and held in reverence. And he soon afterwards found an opportunity of banishing them

¹ The following words of a trustworthy contemporary, the Protestant historian Schoell (*Cours d'Histoire*, vol. xliv. p. 71), are remarkable:—The levellers, who aimed at the destruction of monarchy, desired before all things to annihilate the power of the Church; and to accomplish this they needed to deprive her of the support of that spiritual militia which had specially devoted itself to the defence of the Papacy, namely, the Society of the Jesuits; and this is the true cause of the abhorrence with which that body of men was regarded. To be a hater and persecutor of Jesuits, was in itself enough to entitle a man to the name of a philosopher. And thus those princes who lent themselves to the suppression and persecution of the Society of Jesus, did but show themselves willing tools in the hands of the philosophers for the destruction of their own thrones.

also from Portugal and all the Portuguese colonies. In 1758 an attempt was made to assassinate the weak King, Joseph Emmanuel; and in spite of the unstained reputation which they everywhere enjoyed, Pombal accused the Jesuits of being implicated in it. He caused their houses to be surrounded by soldiers and carefully searched, but without discovering anything suspicious. Not the less, however, was their fate determined on. The members of the society were declared rebels, traitors, and enemies of the King. They were banished from the country, and all who should harbour them threatened with death. The sentence was carried out with the greatest barbarity. They were dragged from prison to prison, like the worst of criminals—the greater number were crowded on board ships, and landed destitute upon the shores of the Papal States, whilst a hundred and twenty-four were kept prisoners in noisome dungeons. To justify these measures with the people by offering them a horrible spectacle, a member of the Society, Fr. Malagrida, after three years of frightful imprisonment, was given up to the Tribunal of the Inquisition, which was at that time but a tool in Pombal's hands, its president being his brother, and its members entirely subservient to him. This Jesuit was an old man of seventy-two; he had exercised a wonderful apostolate of thirty years in the wilds of South America, and was held in the highest reverence by all. Nevertheless, on the charge of having whilst in prison written two books, (of which however, the world never heard anything), he was condemned to an ignominious death, as a heretic and blasphemer, and in 1761 was hanged, his body burned, and the ashes thrown into the Tagus. He had been so famous as a missionary that even the English were used to call him the Apostle of Brazil; and Voltaire, speaking of the sentence pronounced on him, said, "that in it the utmost excess of folly and absurdity was united with its element of horror."

In France too, an endeavour was made to lay an attempted murder of the King to the charge of the Jesuits. The crime was committed on January 5, 1757, and its real author was Robert Francis Damiens. He had however, at a former period of his life been employed by the Jesuits, and this alone, in spite of the contrary testimony of the criminal himself, was sufficient to bring the order into disrepute. But as neither accusations nor calumnies sufficed to implicate any of its members, it was necessary to have recourse to other means.¹

¹ Voltaire's words to Damilaville show the little credit that this story met with. "The whole world," he writes, "would be up in arms against me, and on the side of the Jesuits, were I to accuse them of a crime, with respect to which all Europe, and the testimony of Damiens himself, has declared them innocent."

In Portugal the holiness of the order itself had been recognised, though its members were represented as traitors; but in France, where the authority of the Holy See had been much undermined, it was not so. The French Parliament did not hesitate to declare an order, which had been approved by the Council of Trent and a long series of popes, as impious, and an abettor of all crime. In 1761 it ordered that all the colleges of the Jesuits should be closed, and forbade them to receive novices. A numerous assembly of French bishops in vain endeavoured to protect them. It was in vain that the excellent Pope Clement XIII. interfered to avert the threatening storm, by declaring in Consistory the decree of the parliament as void, and representing to the King "that it was only the enemies of religion who desired the destruction of the order, as they knew that without it they would never accomplish their evil designs." The numerous apologies put forth in their defence were prohibited and burnt; four thousand Jesuits who refused to quit the society were relentlessly banished; their property was seized and in part squandered, and their churches in many places plundered and desecrated. In the face of this iniquitous proceeding of the French Government, Clement XIII. had the courage to publish, in 1765, a special bull, in which he solemnly confirmed anew the institution of the Society of Jesus, declaring that "it breathed in the highest degree the spirit of holiness and piety, both in its ends, and in the means it used to attain them."

This fresh papal confirmation, did not however deter the Spanish minister, d'Aranda, from carrying out the expulsion of the Jesuits from Spain. The King, Charles III., was personally well inclined towards the society; but d'Aranda, who favoured the principles of the Revolution, used every means of embittering him against it to the utmost, by disgraceful intrigues, and especially by forged letters. In 1767 he caused, with the royal permission, six thousand Jesuits to be seized by night and hurried into ships which lay ready to carry them into exile. After enduring the greatest hardships and sufferings, they at last met with a hospitable reception in Corsica. A law was now passed that no Jesuit should henceforth enter Spanish territory under pain of death. The fathers of the society in the Spanish colonies of America were seized, amidst the heartrending sorrow of their flocks, and sent to join their companions in banishment. The example thus set, was soon followed by Naples and Parma with equal severity. The enemies of the order, however, could not feel themselves entirely secure of their victory over it, until they should have obtained its formal dissolution from the Pope; and they themselves felt that such a demand on the Father of Christendom would be a preposterous one. "It would be

ridiculous," d'Alembert wrote to the King of Prussia, "to suggest to the Pope to disband this stout militia of his. It would be like the treaty of the wolves with the sheep, the first article of which was that they should send away the dogs." Nevertheless the Bourbon courts continued more and more urgently to press their request on Clement XIV., threatening schism if it was not granted, until at last, yielding to their importunity, on July 21, 1773, he published a Brief in which the order was suppressed, "for the maintenance of the common peace." The society, then numbering 22,000 members, submitted with the most perfect obedience to the sentence of dissolution pronounced on it by the Head of the Church. Its last General, Laurentius Ricci, died in prison in the Castle of St. Angelo, in 1775, solemnly certifying his own and his order's innocence of the charges which had been brought against them. He was buried with great pomp by order of Pope Pius VI.

With the order of Jesuits, fell, as the protestant writer, J. von Müller, says, "a strong bulwark of all authority;" and so much the more easily could the conspirators put their evil design into execution, of dethroning the pious King, Louis XVI., proclaiming the sovereignty of the people, and, by the people's means, securing the real sovereignty for themselves. In view of such an end, the people had long been told that all power, instead of coming, as the Gospel teaches, from God, in reality proceeds from themselves. And now their discontent at the bad government, high taxes, and heavy national debt was fomented to the utmost. In 1789 the dissatisfaction had reached such a height that the King was forced to call together the States-General at Versailles. This assembly consisted of three hundred representatives of the nobles, three hundred of the clergy, and six hundred of the *Tiers Etat*, or citizen class. This last claimed greater and greater privileges from Government, and gave themselves out as the National Assembly; and when summoned by the King to disperse, replied to his messenger, "Slave! tell your master that we are convoked by the people, and that his bayonets alone can drive us from our posts." The King, in the eyes of this party, was merely the people's plenipotentiary,—a public officer whose business it was to carry out the will of the nation. In the beginning of October, a furious mob

rushed from Paris towards Versailles, beset the palace, killed several of the guards, forced themselves, howling and raging, into the innermost apartments, and obliged the King and royal family to return as prisoners to the capital. The Revolution had indeed come, and Louis found himself powerless to stem the storm.

Greedy eyes were now fixed upon the property of the Church, which the club of the Jacobins in Paris had called in mockery the "dowry of the Revolution." The clergy offered in vain to make the hardest sacrifices, even to the melting down of the costly Church plate. With the assistance of a band of ruffians, who threatened to hang all bishops and priests to the nearest lamp-posts, a declaration was effected in November, that all Church goods were the property of the nation. In July of the following year, the whole fabric of the French Church was overturned, simply by an act of the National, or as it was now called, Constitutional Assembly, without any concurrence whatever on the part of the ecclesiastical authorities. The one hundred and thirty-five existing bishoprics were reduced to eighty-three; the cathedral chapters suppressed, and all canonries and benefices abolished. It was enacted that the ratification of the appointment of bishops by the Pope should cease; and that bishops and parish priests were to be now chosen by the electoral assemblies of the departments, amongst the members of which Calvinists and Jews were to be found. This was styled the Civil Constitution of the clergy, and to this all priests were required to swear. Those who refused to take the oath were to be debarred from exercising their religious functions, and if found doing so were to be prosecuted as disturbers of the public peace. The French clergy, however, showed themselves no hirelings, but true shepherds of their flocks; notwithstanding the murderous threats of hired ruffians, nearly all refused to take the impious oath. Rather than do so, one hundred and twenty-five bishops, and over fifty thousand priests, boldly faced every danger. But notwithstanding this resistance, the election of the new *constitutional* bishops, as they were called, was

proceeded with. An apostate bishop, of whom there were but four, consecrated some of those chosen, and they in their turn consecrated the remainder. The civil constitution was rejected, and the election and appointment of the new bishops pronounced null and void, by Pope Pius VI.; and, in return, his French possessions of Avignon and Venaissin were seized on by the party in power. The faithful priests were treated with ever-increasing rigour. On August 26th, 1792, the Legislative Assembly, which had meanwhile taken the place of the Constitutional Assembly, pronounced upon them sentence of banishment; but this, to the Council of the People, which then possessed great influence in Paris, seemed far too mild, and it was changed to one of death. The terrible Danton undertook its execution. A frightful butchery of priests took place in Paris during September, in which three hundred priests, an archbishop, and two bishops were slain. When the signal for massacre was given in the Abbey of St. Germain, and some drew back shuddering, one of the hired assassins of the Council of the People called out to them, "What! you are afraid of blood? You must get used to it!" Like tragedies were enacted in other towns, which the Council of the People, out of its hatred for priests, incited to follow the example of the capital. In February 1793 the persecution was renewed. Hundreds of faithful priests were thrown into damp prisons, condemned to penal servitude, or sentenced to transportation to Cayenne or Africa, and crowded on shipboard deprived of every necessary. Nearly four hundred of these heroic men died in a short time on board two transports whilst lying at anchor off Rochefort. Such barbarities were only called "spilling the blood of a few traitors."¹

¹ The cruelties into which savage men were led by priest-hatred are indescribable. Amongst the priests murdered at Rheims was the holy and venerable Alexandre, dean of the cathedral. He was burnt alive over a slow fire; his torments being thus made to last above an hour. He had before been compelled to witness the execution, in the same manner, of his friend the Abbé Romain. Whilst he himself was being burnt, his tormentors from time to time withdrew

“The Christian calendar was abolished, Sundays and holidays done away with, and churches ruined and desecrated. Everything that could recall Christianity was swept away. Men’s madness went so far that they adored reason as a goddess; and choosing a prostitute as its representative, led her in a triumphal procession into the cathedral of Notre Dame, and setting her on the high altar in the place of the Crucified One, sang hymns in her honour.”

The design of the philosophers was to unchristianise France, but it did not, however, stop there; for they adopted the maxim of the impious La Mettrie, “that the world can never be happy until it has denied the existence of God;” and in what manner they desired to attain their end is shown by the resolution they expressed, “never to rest until they had strangled the last king with the bowels of the last priest.” These champions of progress did indeed set vigorously to work to obliterate all traces of Christianity. The old calendar was steeped in Christian reminiscences, and its very starting-point was our Blessed Lord’s Nativity. It was superseded therefore by a new republican calendar, which began its reckoning from the 22d of September 1792, the first year of the new redemption. The observance of Sundays and holidays was forbidden; and it was even made a crime to dress better on them than on other days. Every tenth, instead of every seventh day, was appointed for the day of rest. Churches without number were recklessly pulled down or burnt, or else turned into theatres, factories, or stables. The splendid church of St. G  nevi  ve in Paris was converted into a heathen pantheon, and bore the inscription, “Aux grands hommes, la patrie reconnaissante.” Thither the mortal remains of Voltaire were solemnly carried; and there, too, the abominable Marat and other heroes of the Revolution found an honourable resting-place. At last

him from the fire, that they might gloat over the spectacle of his sufferings. Their barbarity, too, was such, that they forced his own nephew to carry the wood for the pile. Amongst the priests murdered at Lyons, was the Abb   Regni, a man respected by all for his great virtue and charity. The furious mob hacked his fingers from his hands, tore out his entrails, and then cut off his head, and finished by offering his mangled limbs to the passers-by for relics.

all churches whatever, even those of the constitutional clergy, were closed, every kind of Christian worship strictly prohibited, and the idolatry of reason, with loose women for its representatives and priestesses, substituted by a public decree of the State. On the 10th of November 1793, the church of Notre Dame in Paris was made the scene of most frightful desecration. A woman of ill-fame, with a skyblue mantle flung round her, and a Phrygian cap on her head, representing the goddess of reason, was conducted on a triumphal car into this venerable sanctuary, and there, surrounded by the followers of the new faith, enthroned on the high altar, with a crucifix beneath her feet; lewd songs then resounded in her praise, and wild dances and hideous excesses defiled the holy place, and crowned the homage thus rendered to the new divinity. The prophecy of Beauregard was thus fulfilled to the very letter. This frightful impiety was enacted, not only in Paris, but also in many other French cities, and with it was often combined a hideous mockery of holy things. In one place five hundred prostitutes appeared, clothed in sacerdotal vestments. In another, an ass, decked with a mitre and cope, was made to draw along a cart filled with gold and silver altar vessels. Not only did men in devilish rage trample the crucifix under foot, but they also stole consecrated hosts, and, to the eternal shame of the ungrateful human race, flung them to unclean beasts to be devoured. God's existence was openly denied, and His vengeance boldly challenged. The words, "Death is an everlasting sleep," were inscribed over the entrances to cemeteries. If any one should speak a respectful word with regard to Christianity, or be surprised with a crucifix, rosary, picture of a saint, or other Christian emblem, death was the punishment for such an offence. It was only at their own utmost peril that those faithful priests who courageously refused to forsake their flocks, administered the sacraments to the dying. And that such priests might not escape the detection of the spies who constantly watched them, they were not allowed under pain of death, to assume any sort of disguise. Nuns

were starved, illtreated, and led in crowds to execution; whilst public prostitutes were supported at the expense of the State.

The goal was now reached which the philosophers had desired and striven after; for impiety was enthroned on the altar, and in the sanctuary itself, man celebrated his deepest degradation. Holy things were outraged, Christianity contemned, the practice of religion was punished with death, and vice was everywhere triumphant. That the Revolution itself was the work of those godless spirits who, taking the words "*Ecrasez l'Infame*" for their motto, had conspired together to root out the religion of Christ, is sufficiently shown by the diabolical hatred towards everything holy, and the burning desire to obliterate all traces of Christianity which inspired the revolutionists. None saw this more clearly than La Harpe, who, before his conversion, had belonged to the philosophical party, and had been a special favourite with Voltaire. He thus indignantly addresses his former allies: "Yes! you philosophers, who boast yourselves of being the benefactors of mankind, you it is who have placed swords and firebrands in the hands of these raging madmen, and have removed every bond that could have restrained their violence. In what court can you hope to plead your innocence?" "You senseless philosophers" (they are thus apostrophised by another contemporary),¹ "who have prepared the way for this glorious Revolution, prating the while of reason and enlightenment,—come forth now from your graves, walk amongst the ruins and the heaps of dead, and tell us how it was possible that, in this age of which you so boasted yourselves, thirty tyrants bent on murder should have been able to find three hundred thousand executioners to carry out their bloody decrees! These men have your writings in their pockets, your maxims on their lips, and quotations from your works adorn their speeches from the Tribune. Their grossest acts of injustice have been committed in the name of virtue; in the name of humanity they have slain two millions of men; and have built a hundred thousand prisons in the name of liberty."²

¹ Richer-Serise, author of "*L'Accusateur Public*."

² Should there be any who think that the heavy national debts, or the oppression of the people, were the *causes* which produced the horrors of the Revolution, we can refer him to the "*Triumph of Philosophy*," by the Protestant writer Stark, especially part ii. chap. xvi.; and also to Barruel's "*Histoire du Jacobinisme*." Such circumstances were but the accidental means by which the train was fired leading to the mine, long since prepared by the philosophers.

“ With religion disappeared order, prosperity, and public security ; the throne itself was overturned and shattered ! In 1793 the pious, benevolent, and but too merciful King, Louis XVI., was beheaded, and his wife and sister soon after shared his fate. For two years France was the scene of atrocities for which history records no parallel. Blood flowed in streams, and neither age nor sex was spared. In La Vendée five hundred children, of whom the eldest was but fourteen, were killed at one time, for no other cause than that their parents remained true to God and the King. The whole number murdered during this time of horror is estimated by some at two millions. And all this was done under pretext of promoting the welfare of mankind ! ‘ Enlightenment ’ was the watchword of those who destroyed religion ; and ‘ Liberty ’ and ‘ Equality ’ were in the mouths of the murderers and tyrants. At last, however, the oppressors began to tremble for their own lives, and, in order to stem the torrent of lawlessness which had set in, they caused it to be publicly announced that the nation should return to a belief in God and in the immortality of the soul.”

The condition of France in 1790, already appeared so hopeless, and the machinations of the clubs, especially that of the Jacobins, were so powerful, that thousands left their country to seek safety in foreign lands. On June 20, 1791, the King, who possessed but a shadow of his former power, made an attempt with his family to cross the frontier ; but they were taken, brought back to Paris, and closely watched. Rumours were heard that the King would be deposed ; and when Louis firmly refused to sign the decree by which such priests as were true to their calling were condemned to banishment, the popular irritation reached its height. On the 10th of August 1792, after fearful slaughter, an armed mob took the royal palace by storm. Four days later, the King and royal family were carried prisoners to the Temple Tower, a strong fortress which had formerly belonged to the Knights of the Temple. Here they were closely guarded, and treated with the utmost rigour. Yet worse however, was to come. So long as the King remained living, the fickle tide of popular feeling might at any moment turn in his favour. To be rid therefore, of this danger, he was indicted for high treason towards France and the nation, placed on trial, and with little delay sentenced to death. Weak as he had shown himself in curbing the progress of the Revolution, he met

death like a Christian hero. With the most perfect resignation to the will of God, he drew up his last testament, in which he avowed his adherence to the Catholic faith, and his innocence of the charges brought against him; forgave the authors of his death, and commended himself to the divine mercy. The parting with his family was heartrending, but the King remained calm, and when Santérre, the commander of the National Guard, came to fetch him, said in a firm voice, "Let us go." He had already received Holy Communion that morning from the hands of his confessor, whose attendance he had been allowed as a special favour. Forty thousand men stood under arms and formed a double row through which the King was led. A deathlike silence reigned throughout the immense crowd, and a shudder seemed to run through all present. On arriving at the scaffold Louis mounted it with a steady step. His last words were, "Frenchmen, I die innocent. I forgive my enemies. I desire that my death"—— but here his voice was drowned in the roll of drums, which were beaten at Santérre's command. Three executioners bound the unfortunate King upon a board, and pushed him beneath the blade of the guillotine, and in a few seconds all was over. "Son of St. Louis, mount to heaven!" the brave priest said who had faithfully stood by him to the last. The day of his death was appointed to be thenceforth kept as a public festival. It was on the 21st of January 1793 that this good and faithful King perished by the hands of the executioner; and it was in the same year that his implacable enemy, Marat, a monster in human form, fell under the avenging knife of Charlotte Corday. Urged by his journal, "*The People's Friend*," the Parisian rabble had struck off the heads of two hundred and seventy thousand men; but so far does human folly go that an altar was erected to him as to a martyr of liberty,¹ and his ashes were placed in the Pantheon, whilst his heart was enclosed

¹ See "*Biographie Universelle*," article "*Marat*."

in the richest urn that could be found among the royal treasures.

France was now a republic. Inaugurated as it was by the shedding of the blood of a king, what life was it probable that the new government would respect? On the 16th of October of the fatal year 1793, the Queen, Marie Antoinette, the worthy daughter of the great Empress Maria Theresa, was carried forth to die, her hands bound behind her, in the common cart used at executions. Three months before her only son, the young prince Louis XVII., had been taken from her and apprenticed to a fanatical Jacobin cobbler, who treated him with such brutality as in a short time brought him to his grave. Even the saintly Madame Elizabeth, "the angel of the Temple prison," as she had been called, was not spared. Long before, she had offered her life to God, and her murderers did their best to make the sacrifice a hard one, by causing twenty-two of her companions in misfortune to be first executed before her eyes. Nevertheless, she mounted the bloody scaffold with a firm step and cheerful bearing, and with her last breath prayed for France and for her murderers.

The wild hatred towards royalty was not confined to the living, but extended also to the dead. At St. Denis the coffins of fifty kings were dug up and their ashes scattered to the winds. None now held his life secure. At the instigation of Marat, a revolutionary tribunal had been set up, which imprisoned all suspected persons on the charge of high treason. Nearly half a million were in this manner held captives. What were called "trials" were mere mockeries of justice. Thousands died of grief and misery in prison, and hundreds of thousands on the scaffold. In Paris the guillotine was scarcely ever idle. A procession of long carts was daily to be seen carrying out victims to execution. Infirm old men who had to be assisted to mount the scaffold,—generals, ministers, merchants, students, priests, and officials of all sorts, were cut down without distinction. The tribunals of the larger cities, vied with that of Paris in forwarding the bloody work. Armed mobs, with the guillotine in their train,

traversed the provinces. The most virtuous and peaceful citizens were sentenced to death as "aristocrats." At times even the guillotine seemed to work too slowly. In Lyons and Toulouse the citizens were mown down by hundreds with grapeshot, and houses and streets were blown into the air. At Nantes the condemned were placed in boats in the bottoms of which were trapdoors, and drowned in the river Loire. Fifteen thousand perished, partly in this manner, and partly in the horrible prisons, in which living and dead were crowded together in heaps.

La Vendée, a district in the west of France, where piety and patriarchal manners still reigned, suffered most frightfully. Its inhabitants took up arms to fight for the Catholic religion.¹ Their desperate valour gained them some brilliant victories; but they were at last overpowered, and then the rage of the victors knew no bounds. The Republicans traversed the country in every direction, set fire to the villages, and cut down every one they met, without distinction of age or sex. The most horrible cruelties were enacted. On one occasion, five hundred boys and girls, of whom the oldest was but fourteen, were collected before the gates of Bourg-Fumelle to be shot. When they heard the balls whistling over their heads, they burst the cords that tied them, and rushed amongst their executioners, clinging to their knees, and begging for mercy. Their terror and helplessness might have softened the hearts of tigers; but the friends of liberty knew no compassion. Some of the children attempted to fly, but were pursued by horsemen and cut down. One soldier became mad on witnessing the horrible scene, and was immediately put to death; an officer, too, who begged that one small group of children might be spared, was led out and shot as a coward.²

Terror, like to that which accompanies the onward march of a pestilence which is every day spreading farther and demanding fresh victims, now lay brooding over France. The destroying angels in this case however, were men; and men too, who boasted themselves of being the restorers of the lost rights of humanity. All trembled before the blood-

¹ See Rohrbacher, "*Histoire de l'Eglise*," vol. xxvii. p. 491.

² See "*Accusateur Public*," note 12, p. 265, in Mérault, "*Les Apologistes de la Religion*."

thirsty tyrant Robespierre. One by one he set aside his rivals, and climbed at last to the topmost pinnacle of power, as "the great man of the Republic." The spectacle of appalling impiety which met his view, then however, gave him cause for fear, for it was such as made all government impossible. "Even if there should be no God," he said in one of his speeches, "it would be necessary to invent one; and though the existence of God and the immortality of the soul should be but vain imaginations, they are at least as beautiful imaginations as any the human mind has ever produced." He caused it therefore to be proclaimed "that the French nation should again recognise the existence of a Supreme Being and believe in the immortality of the soul." A day of public rejoicing was appointed to celebrate the occasion; Robespierre himself appeared as high-priest, richly dressed, and bearing flowers and ears of corn in his hand; and after delivering a philosophical address to the immense crowd assembled, applied a lighted torch to three colossal effigies representing "Atheism," "Self-seeking," and "Discord." He himself however, sacrificed countless victims to his own ambition, and terrorism was at its climax under his rule; and at last the smouldering hatred broke forth against him. When he found his power gone and himself forsaken, he shot himself in the mouth with a pistol, but only shattered his jawbone; and the tyrant by whom so many had been pitilessly delivered to death, was himself now dragged, his face all covered with blood, through the streets on the headsman's cart. The procession halted before the house where he had lived, and there a troop of women executed a dance; and when his head fell, the crowd clapped and shouted applause, and uttered curses on his memory. The waters of the bloody deluge began now gradually to subside. Together with Robespierre his adherents fell also, and the supreme power became vested in a Directory of five men. None yet thought however, of returning to the Christian religion, the destruction of which had brought with it such misery; and faithful priests were still illtreated, imprisoned, and trans-

ported. A new worship was set up, with heathen rites and festivals. It was, however, but a spectre of the past, and vanished amid the mockery of the people. In 1797 the French armies met with brilliant successes in the north of Italy, and early in the following year the States of the Church were conquered and laid under heavy contribution. Pope Pius VI., although eighty-one years of age, and suffering from illness, was carried prisoner from Rome, confined first in different Italian monasteries, and afterwards brought to France, and there, at Valence, poor and forsaken, he fell asleep in Christ (August 29, 1799). Many now dreamed of a heathen Rome, to be erected on the ruins of the Papacy; and Protestant journals triumphed, prophesying that "the Romanists would never have another Pope." But God's Providence watched over His Church and gave success to the Austrian arms in Italy. Thirty-five cardinals were thus enabled to meet at Venice under the protection of the Emperor Francis II., and there (March 14, 1800) they elected as Pope, the excellent Cardinal-Archbishop of Imola, Chiaramonti. He took the name of Pius VII., and soon after entered Rome amid general rejoicings. It was permitted to him to see the triumph of the Church, but not until he had followed his Divine Master in treading the thorny path of suffering.

"In the year 1799 Napoleon, as consul, seized for himself the supreme power. He dared not, however, attempt the government of a people without religion, and therefore re-established Catholic worship, and concluded a formal treaty with the Pope (1801). This peace with the Church however, did not last long. Napoleon, dazzled by prosperity, made demands with which Pius VII., as head of the Church, was unable to comply, and the French seized on Rome, and carried off the Pope as a prisoner (1809). But God had visibly protected His Church ten years before, when Pius VI. had died as a captive in France, and neither did His mercy fail her now. Napoleon was defeated by the allied powers, and deposed from his sovereignty, and the Pope returned in triumph to Rome (1814). He was succeeded in his sacred office by Leo XII., then by Pius VIII., and Gregory XVI., and in June 1846 by Pius IX., the two hundred and fifty-eighth successor of St. Peter."

After the Directory had held the reins of government for

some years, and had brought the Republic to the brink of destruction, the young and famous Corsican general, Napoleon Bonaparte, overthrew the existing constitution, and rose as First Consul to the head of the State. Seeing clearly that it would be difficult, or rather impossible, to govern with peace and prosperity a people unshackled by any religion, he resolved to re-establish the Catholic faith, in which he had been born and brought up, throughout his dominions. Such churches as remained unsold, were given back to be used in God's service, the priests were reinstated in their office, and the liberty of divine worship guaranteed. Before long, desiring to place ecclesiastical affairs on a solid basis, he applied to Pope Pius VII. for his co-operation, and in 1801 a concordat was arranged, by which France was divided into ten archbishoprics and fifty bishoprics. It is deeply to be regretted however, that Napoleon, entirely on his own authority and without the Pope's knowledge, appended to it certain additional clauses—the so-called "Organic Articles" namely, which in many ways placed the concerns of the Church at the arbitrary disposal of the Government. When, in 1804, Napoleon changed the Republic into an hereditary Empire, he invited the Pope to his coronation in Paris. For the good of religion, Pius undertook the journey, and was everywhere received with enthusiasm. At the ceremony of the coronation however (December 2, 1804), Napoleon placed the crown himself on his own head and that of his wife, and received only the unction, from the hands of the Holy Father. Thenceforward he began to treat the Pope almost like a prisoner, and only after much difficulty gave permission for him to return to Rome. The breach soon became more serious. The new Emperor made demands on the Pope with which the latter could not comply; amongst others, that he should dissolve his brother Jerome's marriage, which he (Pius) had already pronounced valid. The requirements of the Emperor became more arrogant and pressing; he wished that the Pope should banish from his dominions the subjects of those powers with whom he was himself at war, and close

his ports against their vessels, especially against those of the English. This Pius refused to do, saying that he was the father of all Christendom, and neither could nor would treat any one as an enemy. And when the Emperor attempted to frighten him with threats into compliance, he replied with courage, "Whatever power your Majesty may feel yourself to possess, we on our side yet know that there is a God above all monarchs, who is the avenger of the just and innocent, and to whom all human power is subject." The persecution now began. In the year 1804 General Miollis entered Rome, took possession of all the outposts, planted eight guns opposite the Papal palace of the Quirinal, exercised every kind of tyranny, and banished several of the cardinals. Pius VII. steadfastly rejected the insolent proposals of his enemy, by which he was to entirely resign his temporal sovereignty and confine himself to the exercise of his spiritual powers. In May 1809 Napoleon, who was then at Vienna, proclaimed the States of the Church to be incorporated with the French Empire, and declared Rome to be a free imperial city. The Pope had now no alternative but to exercise his spiritual authority, and he did so fearlessly, though with a heavy heart. Sentence of excommunication was pronounced against Napoleon, and the bull declaring it affixed to the doors of the three principal churches of Rome. On this the French forced their way by night into the Quirinal, seized on the Pope, and hurrying him into a carriage, conveyed him with the utmost speed across the Alps to Grenoble, and then back again to Savona, in Italian territory, where he was kept a close prisoner.

Napoleon was now at the height of his greatness. He had founded and destroyed kingdoms; his most powerful European enemies were humbled, and millions of brave soldiers stood ready to face death at his word. Elated by the possession of a power which seemed irresistible, he mocked at the bann of the Pope, and said, writing to the Viceroy of Italy, "Does Pius then think, that his excommunication will cause the weapons of my soldiers to drop from their hands?" On the

Holy Father's refusal to appoint bishops of the Emperor's choosing, the latter, in order to find some way of settling the difficulty, assembled a council of the nation in Paris (June 1811), but dissolved it again after some barren negotiations. In June 1812 Napoleon gave orders that the Pope should be brought to France. After a long and fatiguing journey, which was continued even during the hottest midday hours, Pius, late at night, reached the Hospice of Mont Cenis, where he became so dangerously ill that he received the last sacraments; but notwithstanding this however, he was inhumanely forced to proceed, until he arrived, almost dying, at Fontainebleau. Not long afterwards Napoleon returned from Russia, where his pride had been fearfully smitten by the Hand of God. One of the most formidable and most splendid armies that the world had ever seen, remained behind him buried in the snows. The weapons had literally fallen from the frozen hands of his soldiers. The allied forces pressed threateningly forward; it was more necessary than ever that he should come to an understanding with the Pope. He went therefore in person to visit him, but behaved towards him with the most unbecoming disrespect. But Napoleon's star was fast setting. The great battle of Leipzig (18th of October 1813) made his fall inevitable, and on the 12th of April 1814 he was obliged to sign his abdication in the very castle of Fontainebleau where he had treated the Pope so unworthily. He was taken first to Elba, and afterwards to Saint Helena, a desolate island in the midst of the ocean. The much-tried Pontiff solemnly re-entered Rome on the 24th of May 1814, amidst the rejoicings of his people. His efforts were now directed towards healing the severe wounds the Church had received, and to promote this end he re-established the Society of Jesus (August 7th, 1814). The history of Pius VII. shows most clearly that to no earthly power, however great, is it permitted to overthrow the Chair of Peter; but that he who lifts his hand to abase that sacred throne which God Himself has established, does but prepare the way for his own destruction.

SECTION XLVIII.

SPREAD OF UNBELIEF IN GERMANY—INNOVATIONS HOSTILE TO THE CHURCH—GOD'S PROTECTION OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH—HER SPREAD IN FOREIGN LANDS—REVIVAL OF THE CATHOLIC SPIRIT IN EUROPE AND SPECIALLY IN GERMANY—PRESENT DANGERS OF THE CHURCH—RETROSPECTIVE VIEW OF HER CONTINUED EXISTENCE.

“Divine Providence had willed, through the horrors of the French Revolution, to show the world to what misery it is led by apostasy from God and from the Christian faith. But this warning unhappily, was not everywhere taken, and the so-called ‘enlightenment’ of the French philosophers found entrance also into other lands. Everywhere ancient and venerable rules were abolished, and religious and ecclesiastical foundations suppressed; the authority and influence of the Church was weakened, her rights restricted, her benefits and blessings unrecognised; and open unbelief allowed even from the pulpit to spread abroad its fatal principles.”

WHEN arrogant philosophers ascended the tribune, and proclaimed in the ears of an applauding multitude the blasphemy that “there is no God but Reason,” the horrible chastisements which followed soon brought the pride of their boasted wisdom to shame. God permitted them to take their own way, and soon the bloody evidence lay open to all eyes, that of all evils, irreligion is the worst; and that

“The tiger’s tooth and the hyena’s rage
To poor humanity less fatal are
Than arrogance of false philosophy.”¹

The chastisement which had thus followed on rebellion, was a voice from heaven warning all nations to remain true to God and to the Christian faith, the rejection of which had plunged one of the most flourishing nations in the world into the deepest misery and degradation. But unhappily this warning was not heeded, and, instead of turning from them with horror, men lent a willing ear to those fatal principles which had issued in France in the overthrow of the altar and

¹ Pfeffel on the French Revolution.

the throne, and even welcomed them as the harbingers of light and wisdom.

Even before the French Revolution, infidel doctrines had met with a favourable reception in Germany; Luther himself had unintentionally prepared the way for them, when, with unexampled audacity, he had entirely cast off the authority of the Church in the interpretation of Holy Scripture, and set up the principle of free inquiry; thus, though apparently without himself being aware of it, making human reason the judge of revealed truth. It then soon became evident, that each one only found in the words of Scripture, such a meaning as he himself was disposed to attach to them, and that none would allow the Bible to say anything, except what appeared to themselves to be reasonable. What wonder, then, if at last men assumed the right of calling in question the most vital doctrines of religion, of bringing the whole Christian revelation before the tribunal of reason, and of judging it according to the measure of human understanding? It was indeed as a matter of fact, at the Protestant universities and among Protestant men of letters, that undisguised Rationalism first appeared. Protestant theologians did not shrink from denying the inspiration of Scripture and declaring many of its books not genuine. They rejected all doctrines in which mysteries were involved, and at last stripped Christianity entirely of its supernatural character by denying the divinity of its Founder. Philosophers like Kant and Fichte destroyed the Christian faith in the hearts of numbers of their disciples. That portion of German literature too, which had its rise among the Protestant party, partook in many ways of this unchristian character, and spread far and wide the fatal poison of unbelief and immorality. Besides this antichristian tendency on the part of learning, many other things concurred to foster the spirit of infidelity. Since the year 1740 Frederick II., whose brilliant victories had won for him the name of "the Great," had occupied the throne of Prussia. The perusal of the writings of the French philosophers had early converted him to their opinions. He

entered into intimate relationship with them, corresponded with them frequently, invited the principal among them to Berlin, assisted them with money and advice, and joined with them in casting scorn on Christianity. His example found imitators, especially among the upper classes, so that it thus became a mark of fashion to mock at the Church and religion. In the year 1776, at the University of Ingoldstadt, the order of the "Illuminati" was founded by Professor Weishaupt. It was in reality, a formal and well-organised conspiracy against Christianity and against those temporal sovereignties of which Christianity forms the foundation, although this last object of the society was divulged only to the highest order of the initiated. The leading principles of the society were as follows:—"Religion is an imposture, princes are usurpers, each father of a family is a sovereign, and reason is the only law of humanity." The designs of the order were after a time discovered, and Weishaupt was banished from Bavaria. He was favourably received however, in Gotha, by Duke Ernest, and the society, which had already become widely spread, especially in Protestant Germany, long continued to carry on its intrigues in concert with the German Freemasons, of whom Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick was grand-master. Its endeavours were powerfully seconded by the "*Deutsche Bibliothek*,"¹ published by Nicolai in Berlin, which was, as Cardinal Pacca truly said of it, "a very arsenal of hell." Its object was to praise and recommend everything that was done or written in enmity towards, or in derision of, Christianity, and to stigmatise even a whisper in its favour, as an evidence of folly or madness.

A sovereign, too, who before all things was bound to protect the Catholic Church, on the contrary, did very much to co-operate in her disfavour with the unchristian tendencies of the age. The Emperor Joseph II., after the death of the great Empress, Maria Theresa, was misled by false principles and opinions, into introducing religious innovations which

¹ German library.

were much desired by the enemies of the Church, since they resulted in placing her completely under the tutelage of the State. The bishops were strictly forbidden to make any Papal brief or bull public, until it had been first submitted to the government, and in the same way were obliged to obtain leave of the government before publishing their own indults or pastorals. The education and training of priests was taken out of the hands of the bishops, the diocesan seminaries were abolished and replaced by general seminaries, as they were called, one of which served for several dioceses. Here antichristian works were used as text-books for instruction, and the heads and professors themselves were not seldom men who undermined the faith and morals of the students. The Emperor, on his own authority, suppressed all the contemplative religious houses, thus abolishing at once seven hundred convents. Those that remained were reduced to such a state of dependence, and so disunited from their several orders, as to make their continued existence impossible. And many other enactments equally fatal to the well-being of the Catholic Church were also made.

Deeply grieved over the mischievous changes thus wrought, Pius VI. sent the most urgent warnings to the deluded Emperor, and in the winter of 1782 even undertook the difficult journey from Rome to Vienna, in order, if possible, to divert him from the dangerous path he had chosen. It was the first time for three hundred years that a pope had trodden German soil. His whole journey was one triumphal progress, and he entered Vienna with great solemnity. He could however, effect very little. Joseph still continued to inflict deep wounds on the Austrian Church—wounds which bled for many years, and which even yet are not entirely healed. Unhappily too, he was supported in his hostile attitude towards the Catholic Church by many of her own dignitaries in Germany. In the year 1763 Nicholas von Hontheim had published his notorious book "*Febronius*," in which he advocated the restricting of the power of the Pope over the bishops, with a view to increasing the authority of

secular princes in matters of Church government. Even the infidel Lessing speaks of this work as being nothing more than a shameless flattering of princes. In the year 1786 the three ecclesiastical electors of Mayence, Cologne, and Treves, and the Archbishop of Salzburg, held a congress at Ems, in which resolutions were passed, diametrically opposed to the constitution of the Church, interfering with the existing rights of the Apostolic See, and which, had they been carried out, must have separated the Church in Germany from the Supreme Head of Christendom. The design, however, was happily frustrated by the violent opposition which it met with on all sides. It was not long however, before those German prelates, whose chiefs had so arrogantly set themselves in opposition to their rightful head, themselves received a deep humiliation; for the whole Church in Germany now sustained a fearful blow. At the Peace of Lüneville in 1801, Germany had been obliged to cede much territory to France, and the secular princes now resolved to indemnify themselves for the losses they had thus incurred, at the expense of the property of the Church. By a decree of the Imperial Diet of Ratisbon, the most disgraceful robbery of the Catholic Church in Germany was perpetrated on a vast scale under the name of "Secularisation." The three electoral archbishoprics, Mayence, Treves, and Cologne, twenty bishoprics, and abbeys, convents, and religious foundations without number, were given over with their possessions to the secular rulers, the Church receiving only a scanty compensation; and the solemn protest made by Pope Pius VII. against this act of injustice was entirely disregarded. More scandalous even than the secularisation itself was the manner in which in some places it was carried out. The monks were violently ejected from their quiet cloisters; the churches were plundered; holy things were profaned, and Jews pledged each other out of chalices and made game of sacred vestments, which had been sold to them at public auctions. The secular powers now guided the affairs of the Church according to their pleasure. It was endeavoured

in all ways to destroy the influence and to diminish the reputation of the clergy. Pernicious books were introduced into schools; men of known indifference, or of anti-Catholic opinions, were appointed as teachers; and all means were adopted to promote the ascendancy of Protestantism.

“God however, never ceased to protect His Church, and glorified her even by many undeniable miracles. But the greatest miracle of all, is her continued spread in all parts of the world, notwithstanding the many and powerful obstacles which are everywhere raised against her. This has been most especially striking in North America. In less than fifty years, twenty dioceses, with seminaries, convents, colleges, and other religious institutions, have been founded in the United States.¹ Amongst Asiatic nations, the blood of martyrs too, has become the seed of fresh Christian communities. In England, churches and convents are everywhere multiplying, to meet the wants of the numbers who are continually returning to the true fold.”

As in France, so also in Germany, the protection of God over His Church was unmistakable. In France men had desired to see religion violently rooted up, and for this reason had excited a bloody revolution against the Catholic faith. But this revolution swallowed up its own children, and the Church came forth out of the trial renewed and purified. If the persecution against her in Germany was less violent, its authors were none the less set upon her destruction. The design of her enemies was in this instance gradually to undermine her, in the belief that, when deprived of all support, she would of herself fall into ruins. They supposed their object to have been already gained, when, lo! the Catholic Church again arose before them, shorn indeed of much of her external splendour, but full of fresh and youthful life; her teaching yet pure and unadulterated, as when she received it from the first apostolic missionaries, and her episcopate, in its intimate union with the Holy See, recalling the happiest days of Christianity. On the other hand, the

¹ This statement has reference to the fifty years succeeding the establishment of the diocese of Baltimore in 1789. Within the last twenty-five years the increase has been much greater.

enemies who had plotted her destruction were forced to own themselves defeated. Those men of genius whom the world had so loudly applauded as having rendered Christianity untenable by their discoveries in science and metaphysics, were now forgotten, together with their fanciful systems. And those governments who had been most hostile to the Church now saw the necessity of co-operating with the Roman See in healing the wounds which they had dealt her. In 1817 the King of Bavaria entered into a concordat with Pope Pius VII. for the arrangement of ecclesiastical affairs in his kingdom. A like agreement was made by Prussia in 1821, and by Hanover in 1824. Würtemberg, Baden, Electoral Hesse, the Grand Duchy of Hesse, Nassau, and Frankfort-on-the-Main also opened negotiations with the Pope, which in 1827, after many delays and obstacles had been overcome, resulted in the establishment of the ecclesiastical province of the Upper Rhine; and in the same year the affairs of the Catholics in Saxony underwent regulation. Although by all these concordats the religious freedom of Catholics remained much restricted, yet a decided step in advance was secured by their means. The great injury which had been done the Church by secularisation, as regarded religious foundations, seminaries, education, and the cure of souls, was in a measure made good. And it was with heartfelt joy that the numbers of Catholics who had so long been without pastors saw their most pressing needs supplied, and themselves under the jurisdiction of a bishop in regular communion with the Holy See.

Thankfully as we must recognise the Divine intervention in this unlooked-for turn of the tide in favour of the Catholic Church, it is not thus only that God's care for her has been made manifest. Special mention must be made here of those miracles which have taken place within quite recent times, proving, as they do most strikingly, that God still watches lovingly over His Church and abides with her continually. Without giving credit to every rumour, or desiring in any way to forestall the judgment of the Church, it is impossible to believe that miracles no longer happen in our own days, or to set down as lies or hallucinations all the accounts of miraculous occurrences which reach us. Apart from

the numerous miracles which the Church recognises as such in the Processes of Canonisation of many of God's servants, how many more are there which have been publicly announced in the newspapers and vouched for by unexceptionable witnesses? Of how many credibly attested miracles have we not heard, which have taken place at the intercession of St. Philomena since the finding of her relics in 1802, and again, but a few years since, when the relics of St. Francis Xavier were solemnly exposed for veneration at Goa? How powerful and gracious has not the Blessed Mother of God shown herself by the most evident and astonishing miracles! It is enough here to call to mind the Medal of the Immaculate Conception, the Archconfraternity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in the Church of Our Lady of Victories in Paris, and the movement of the eyes in the miraculous picture of Rimini,¹ not to mention the numberless answers to prayer, and the places of pilgrimage which have given such an impulse to devotion. We may, however, advert to one most strange occurrence, which at the time attracted much attention though the memory of it has now died away. On Sunday, the 17th December 1826, a mission held in the market-town of Migné, near Poitiers, on the occasion of the Jubilee published by Leo XII., was being solemnly brought to a close. It was five o'clock in the afternoon, and the sky was blue and clear. A cross, as is usual at the close of a mission, had just been set up, and one of the two missionaries was addressing an audience of about three thousand people on the glories of the holy sign, and related how it had appeared to the Emperor Constantine, promising him victory. Suddenly, just over the churchyard, and, as it appeared, about 200 feet above the earth, and in a horizontal position, there shone forth a gigantic cross. It looked as though made of red-hot iron, and measured apparently 140 feet in length, 65 feet from arm to arm, and 4 feet in breadth. The apparition lasted for half-an-hour and then vanished, not, however, gradually fading in the darkness, but seeming to grow shorter from the foot upwards, until it disappeared from sight. The impression made by this apparition on the minds of the beholders was extraordinary, and effected a religious revival throughout the whole neighbourhood. In gratitude for such a sign of God's favour, and to transmit the memory of it to posterity, the inhabitants of Migné determined to lengthen their church and give it the form of a cross. A commission, to which a Protestant professor of natural science was attached, was appointed by the Bishop

¹ See Migné, *Nouvelle Encyclop.*, vol. xxv. p. 806. An account is here given of this wonderful occurrence, with the authentication of the Bishop of Rimini, and the brief of Pope Pius IX. which directs the adornment of the picture with a golden crown.

of Poitiers to examine carefully into the facts of the case, and the authenticated report of its proceedings was forwarded to the Pope. On the 18th of April 1827 Leo XII. published a brief in which he declared the miracle, in his opinion, to have been a real one; and some months later he confirmed this judgment by appointing a feast in its commemoration to be kept on the third Sunday of Advent, and at the same time sent a relic of the true Cross to the Church of Migné, to the devout veneration of which an indulgence was attached.¹

But the greatest of all miracles however, is the spreading abroad of the Catholic Church, notwithstanding the many obstacles which beset her path, and the smallness of the human means at her command. In the year 1789, the same in which the enemies of the Church summoned all their forces for her destruction, Pius VI. created the see of Baltimore, the first in the United States of North America, an act which before long produced the happiest results. From that time forward we see Catholic churches, colleges, seminaries, schools, and orphanages spring up as if by magic; new bishoprics and archbishoprics have followed one another in quick succession; convents of various orders have been built and parishes multiplied. The number of the faithful increases from day to day, and that not by emigration only, but through numerous conversions. In 1864 there were in the United States seven Catholic archbishops and (including four vicars apostolic) forty-two bishops, whilst in the same country, Protestantism may be seen, on the other hand, resolving itself into a host of different sects. Like progress has been made by the Church in Australia. It was in the year 1842 that Gregory XVI. created the first bishopric at Sydney, and in 1866 the number of Australian bishoprics already amounted to eleven.

We should exceed our limits were we to attempt to follow in any detail the progress of our holy religion in the distant countries to which it has spread. In proof of its wonderful

¹ Migné, "*Ami de la Religion*," 24th February 1827. See above, p. 336. Leiss, "*Wonderful Apparition of a Cross at Migné*," A.D. 1826.

growth, it is enough for us to mention that our Holy Father Pius IX., from the beginning of his pontificate to the year 1866, has created ninety-six new bishoprics, four archbishoprics, and fifteen apostolic vicariates; and that, moreover, in Peking, the capital of the great Chinese Empire, where the Christian religion even during the present century has been subject to such frightful persecutions, a great Catholic cathedral has now been built, which was solemnly consecrated on the 1st of January 1867.

The great missionary activity of the Catholic Church in modern times appears all the more wonderful when we remember that the hard trials through which she had passed, had almost entirely deprived her of the means and power required for such work. Her worldly goods had been taken from her by secularisation, and she was reduced nearly everywhere to the greatest poverty. The widow's mite was all she had to depend on for the support of her missions. But more pressing still was the want of apostolic labourers. One great order which had supplied so many missionaries for foreign lands was suppressed, and the others counted far fewer members than formerly. Numberless convents, colleges, and religious institutions were closed; and during the time that unbelief was everywhere making its poisonous influence to be felt, the Church was in many ways hindered from bestowing her fostering care upon religion. Who would have believed it possible that a revival so great and so far-spreading could have taken place in so short a time in Catholic missions? We clearly see here the Hand of God, who, just when such a work was most urgently needed, inspired His servants with the will to perform it, and Himself blessed their efforts with success. He it was who awakened in the hearts of so many noble-minded youths that spirit of unshaken courage and generous self-sacrifice which is so especially needful in the life of a missionary. That nursery of apostles, the Propaganda in Rome, the "*Missions Etrangères*" in Paris, and other seminaries for the education of missionaries, were before long filled with students of all

nations and lands; and most wonderful it was to see how France, the very country where the Revolution had raged most frightfully, now outran all other nations in her zeal to spread abroad the Christian faith. A new army of heroic missionaries was soon on its way to all parts of the world, either to take possession again of those old fields which had been conquered and then sorrowfully abandoned by their predecessors, or to themselves gain new islands and countries to Christ. God strengthened them to endure their heavy trials and privations and to meet danger and persecution, and wonderfully blessed the seed which they scattered abroad and which was so often watered with their blood. Not less astonishing than the rapid increase in numbers of Christians in foreign lands, was the change wrought by Divine grace in the hearts of the new converts. Of this the letters of the missionaries themselves, published in the "*Annals of the Propagation of the Faith*," furnish abundant proofs—

Should any one still doubt that the rapid spread of the Catholic Church in distant lands, opposed as it has been by so many difficulties, is a work of Divine grace, a cursory comparison even, with the results of Protestant missions, must convince him of it. Humanly speaking, Protestant missionary societies have had advantages at their command which might have ensured their eclipsing the efforts of Catholics by their own more extended activity. Not only have they been free from opposition on the part of the enemies of religion, who regard Protestantism as simply a stepping-stone towards Rationalism, but they have been favoured and supported by the secular powers, and have had sums of money at their command which are simply incredible. It is impossible to learn without astonishment that in England and America alone during the present century £40,000,000 sterling has been contributed in support of Protestant missions and for the purchase of tracts and Bibles for distribution.¹ Nevertheless the evidence of Protestant writers themselves goes to prove that this huge outlay of money and labour has been not merely fruitless, but in many cases prejudicial even to Christianity. This wholesale scattering of the Bible amongst ignorant heathens, who could not understand it, exposed the Word of God to contempt. The evident want of union among the preachers with regard to the doctrines they taught awoke suspicion and

¹ Marshall's *Christian Missions*, vol. i. chap. i. p. 7.

distrust of their religion, and the tyranny they not unfrequently exercised for the sake of worldly profit excited dislike and hatred towards themselves. The number of converts was small, and even of these few it could scarcely be said that they were converted. Listen to the bitter complaints of a Protestant clergyman of our own day on this subject. After giving an exact account of the number of converts made by the preachers in different parts of the world, he goes on to say: "This sad result appears even yet sadder if we look more closely into the moral condition of the converts. In so doing we find ourselves on the brink of an abyss as deep as is anywhere to be met with in the whole course of the Church's history. For the missionary statistics themselves show us that in this respect there is no difference between the converts and the actual heathen; nay, that the former are often found to have sunk still lower than the better sort among the heathen. The converted are mostly of the lowest classes, and the greater number become Christians with a view to worldly gain. That this is so, the most trustworthy missionaries themselves acknowledge."¹ On viewing the immense difference between the results of Catholic and Protestant missions, the conviction is most clearly forced on us that it is in the true Church only, that a true apostolate is to be found.

One special and peculiar glory of the Catholic Church is the perseverance and constancy of her new converts under the most terrible persecution. In the kingdom of Anam, to the south of China, from 1833 a frightful persecution raged without interruption, until recently, when a most happy change took place. The number of Christians who here endured sufferings of every kind, from 1856 to 1862, far exceeds one hundred thousand. According to the most authentic reports, which were drawn up at the command of Pope Pius IX., more than twenty thousand Christians were sold as slaves, and sixteen thousand put to death in the year 1862. Thousands were beheaded, many were burned, others buried alive, others again thrown into the rivers, and others cast into prison and left to die of hunger. Not men only, but tender women and children behaved with the most heroic constancy. They went forth in troops to die, singing aloud as they walked, hymns of

¹ See *Westfälische Kirchenblatt* für 1865, No. 38, p. 64. Marshall gives numerous other instances.

praise to Jesus and Mary. No less glorious is the history of the sufferings of the Christians of the Corea, a peninsula which lies to the north-east of China. "The history of this Church," says a recent writer, "is written in blood. Her first convert was a martyr, her first native priest was a martyr, her first bishop a martyr, her first European apostles were all martyrs. Every Christian here who is discovered and taken"—so run the reports of the missionaries to this region—"is put to death. Many of the converts after having received baptism leave their homes to seek safety in the mountains, where they either work or starve as Providence shall ordain." The Chinese Christians of the present century too, have proved themselves no unworthy descendants of their heroic ancestors in the faith. It was in vain that the savage and obstinate Emperor, Kia-King, resolved to extirpate Christianity throughout his dominions, and published a cruel edict to that effect; in vain he invented new tortures to force the Christians to apostatise; they gave proofs of such heroic constancy, that Pius VII., on the accounts of some of these martyrdoms being read to him, exclaimed, "It is like a chapter from the Acts of the Martyrs of the early Church!" Notwithstanding this long-continued persecution, the Christians increased visibly in number. In 1831, in the city of Peking alone, and so to speak, under the eye of the Emperor, nine hundred and seventy-eight received baptism; and at the present time, after long years of hard trial which would seem sufficient to have destroyed every vestige of the faith, the dawn of a bright future has arisen upon the Church in China.

Turning our eyes to the condition of the Catholic Church in Europe, we shall see that here too in many countries it has made the most wonderful progress in spite of hostility and oppression. In England, at the beginning of the present century, there were but four vicars-apostolic, and the number of Catholics did not exceed sixty thousand. But since the year 1850 an archbishopric and twelve bishoprics have been established there; from that time the growth of the Church has

been continuous. She now counts more than one million five hundred thousand members, over one thousand churches and chapels, amongst which are many fine cathedrals. Men and women of the highest rank are to be found in the number of her converts; amongst them the late Duchess of Kent, mother of Queen Victoria, and many dukes, earls, barons, and eminent men of the kingdom. Distinguished clergymen, too, and scholars, have sought refuge within her fold at the price of the heaviest worldly sacrifices. "It is a most alarming fact," a speaker was heard to say at a recent Protestant meeting in London, "that at no period since the Reformation has Popery made such progress as during the last few years. It is a most melancholy thing to see so many of our countrymen returning to that cast-off superstition, of which we had imagined that it could never again have raised its head on English soil." In Scotland the most fanatical hatred for a long time reigned with regard to Catholics, but lately the faith has there also made great progress. At the beginning of this century the census gave the number of Catholics as sixteen thousand; but this is now said to have increased to over four hundred thousand. In Holland, Catholic life, during the last thirty years, has undergone a great revival. Since the year 1830, when the tyranny exercised towards Catholics occasioned the separation of Holland from Belgium, the Church there has enjoyed greater freedom. In 1853 a hierarchy was established by the erection of Utrecht into an archbishopric with four suffragan sees. The number of Catholics has increased to four hundred and fifty thousand since 1814, and forms two-fifths of the population. Instead of the fifteen convents which were existing in 1810, we now, after fifty years, find one hundred and seventy-six religious houses for men and women, with three thousand inmates.

And though in all places the progress made may not be so striking; though in many countries, such as Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Poland, the enemies of religion have met with lamentable successes, yet the Catholic spirit has everywhere,

beyond doubt, experienced a most encouraging revival. "It is evident to all," says Monseigneur Dupanloup, "that the great truths of Christianity are gaining ground and influence;—the breath of God is felt to be agitating the world." To mention but one thing:—Does not the manner in which so many religious orders and congregations flourish within the Church, afford the most convincing proofs of her energetic life, displaying as they do a zeal and activity unsurpassed at any former period of her existence? At the present day a spiritual army of more than three hundred and ten thousand warriors is waging an heroic battle throughout the world against the enemy of mankind, having for its object the glory of God, the salvation of souls, and the deliverance of men from the temporal and spiritual evils which oppress them. Wherever we turn, in Europe and America, under the scorching sun of Africa, and in the farthest and most inaccessible kingdoms of Asia, amongst the cannibals of the South Seas, and on the icy plains of the Polar regions, everywhere we find them busied, these champions of the faith, seeking to promote God's glory and to gain immortal souls, and ready at any moment to lay down their lives for their cause.

"In our own country too, much has altered for the better. Convents and charitable institutions have again arisen to care for the sick, instruct the young, and bring up poor children; to afford a refuge for the penitent and promote the spread of the faith. The spirit of scientific research, too, has become less unchristian; fresh zeal has everywhere been awakened, and it is growing more and more clear to all, that within the Catholic Church alone, peace, unity, and eternal blessedness are to be found."

If we examine more closely the course of recent ecclesiastical affairs in Germany, it cannot escape us that there also, Catholic life has received a new and unaccustomed impulse. During the last ten years many events have witnessed to us the tender care with which God watches over the Catholic Church in this our own country, for which our heartfelt gratitude is due. Since the beginning of the present century no efforts have been spared here to trample down the faith. The Catholic Church was ruthlessly deprived of her posses-

sions, her rights, and her liberty; and her enemies already triumphed, and loudly proclaimed that her influence in Germany was gone. They were deceived, however; for the Catholic population adhered loyally to their faith, and lost none of their love and reverence for the Church. Men arose who ardently espoused and bravely defended, the scorned and down-trodden Catholic cause. Periodicals were brought out, notably the "*Katholik*" (published in 1821), which did the Church good service; and the German Catholics had the joy of seeing numbers of their separated brethren, many of them persons distinguished for rank and learning, brought back to the fold of Christ. Of these, Count Leopold von Stolberg was received in 1800, Frederic von Schlegel in 1803, Karl Ludwig von Haller in 1820, the Duke and Duchess of Anhalt-Köthen in 1825, besides many others.¹ A great effect was produced about the year 1837 by the imprisonment of Clement von Drost, the excellent Archbishop of Cologne. It caused an immense sensation, not in Germany only but throughout the whole Catholic world; and, more especially among the Catholics of the Rhine country and Westphalia, called forth the open acknowledgment of how dear their religion was to them, and how vitally wounded they felt themselves to have been in their highest interests. The example of the venerable confessor, who had allowed himself to be led a prisoner from his see rather than betray his pastoral trust in the question of mixed marriages, and that, too, of Martin von Dunin, Archbishop of Posen, who in 1839 evinced a like constancy, awoke in the hearts of many, not admiration only, but a new courage to fight resolutely in defence of religion, and to profess religious principles without shame. In the August of 1844 a great outburst of devotion was awakened by the exposition of the Holy Coat of Treves, which was continued for six weeks by order of the bishop, Wilhelm Arnoldi. The concourse of pilgrims was immense. They poured in from all sides, to the number of about six

¹ Rosenthal, *Convertiten-bilder aus dem 19ten Jahrhundert*.

hundred thousand. Admirable order was preserved amongst the crowds by which the venerable cathedral was filled. Even those who came from curiosity merely, were edified, and the pilgrims returned to the friends they had left behind, to describe in glowing terms the spectacle of piety which they had witnessed. Indignation was aroused however, in such as were internally at variance with the Church, and with the spirit which animated her. An abusive pamphlet, written by an apostate priest, was greeted with loud applause by the enemies of the faith, and its author soon found himself at the head of a new sect, which, however, with the exception of a few bad Catholics, was composed of Protestants only.

The spirit of Catholicism in Germany had thus been already notably strengthened, when in 1848 a considerable change took place in existing circumstances. Notwithstanding the political disturbances then going on, the Catholic bishops met together at Würzburg and deliberated on the affairs of the Church, and many zealous Catholics boldly raised their voices in defence of ecclesiastical liberty. It thus came about that numbers of humiliating restrictions were removed, which had up to this time cramped the development of the Catholic life; and through the freer action of the Church, and the more abundant use of the means at her command for the awakening of the spirit of religion, her territory has since that time been noticeably extending itself. Faith has everywhere gained in power and vitality, and has already brought forth much precious fruit. The clergy, stimulated by the example of their bishops, are worthy of their vocation, and show the most praiseworthy zeal. The religious orders have gained, not in numbers only, but in influence, by their holy discipline and self-sacrificing charity. New congregations, such as that of "The Sisters of the Schools," founded by the late Bishop Wittmann, "The Daughters of Christian Love," "The Poor Servants of Christ," and some others, have been added to the older ones, and, like them, actively devote themselves to the service of God and of their neighbour. The interests of reli-

gion and of mankind are also substantially promoted by the various confraternities which have been formed; such, for instance, as the Confraternity of St. Francis Xavier and St. Boniface, for the maintenance and extension of the Catholic faith; the *Pius-Verein*, for the defence of the liberty of the Church and the development of Catholic life; the *Gesellen-Verein*, for the religious and moral improvement of the working classes; and "the Congregation of St. Vincent and St. Elizabeth," for the relief of the poor. The piety and devotion of the people has been stimulated by frequent missions, by various brotherhoods and sodalities, and by an unwonted number of feasts and jubilees. Scientific research also in relation to theology, has happily been turned aside from the dangerous course into which it had been directed by Hermes and Günther. Many other evidences present themselves of the revival of religious life in Germany. Especially deserving of mention is the open and courageous manner in which so many laymen of the highest position bear witness to their faith, the zeal with which they promote the interests of religion, which has of late been so plainly manifested by the active part they have taken in the formation of confraternities for the exercise of good works, and the filial piety and devotion which they manifest towards the common Father of Christendom, and which was unmistakably shown on the occasion of the celebration by Pius IX. of the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination, April 11, 1869; and lastly, the noble and self-sacrificing generosity with which all take part in the building and worthy adornment of churches and in the support of pious undertakings, insomuch that even the poorest come gladly forward to lay their gift upon the altar. These things all afford proof that fresh zeal has been awakened, and that the conviction is everywhere spreading and penetrating that it is within the Catholic Church alone that unity, peace, and everlasting happiness are to be found.

"If, on the other hand, we see many Christians enchained by the love of earthly goods, indifferent to God and to religion, and the Church still oppressed and persecuted, this ought not to weaken our faith, but

on the contrary, to strengthen us in it ; for herein we do but see the fulfilment of the prophecies recorded in the holy Gospels, and of the prediction that there should one day be a great falling off from God, and from Christ the Saviour of the world (2 Thess. ii. 3, 4 ; Luke xviii. 8). Each one of us must therefore take the greater care not to be himself led away, but to remain faithful unto death, that he may receive the crown of life (Apoc. ii. 10)."

With all that is consoling and encouraging in the present state of the Church, it cannot escape us that elements of evil are nevertheless rife, and that it is only after a hard and difficult struggle that we can look for victory. More than ever is the Church now called on to share the earthly lot of her Divine Founder. Many of her children, it is true, cling to her with fervent love and self-sacrificing devotion, but many others are given up to the pursuit of gain and pleasure, and live on in hardened indifference, troubling themselves neither about Church or religion. Some men again, and their number is by no means inconsiderable, foster hatred and ill-will against the Church, and labour to the utmost of their power to bring about her destruction, in order that a new Paganism may be erected upon her ruins. The hatred of all things holy, which resulted in the last century in the horrors of the French Revolution, is still active in our own days. In Italy religion is subjected to the open attacks of her enemies, who suppress convents, seize church property, imprison bishops, deprive the Holy Father of his possessions, and threaten yet worse evils. In Belgium there is a large party bitterly hostile to the Church, and who have even formed among themselves a society, the members of which are bound not to allow a priest to approach their deathbed. In the United States again there has arisen a very numerous sect of "Spiritualists," as they are called, who profess to hold an intercourse of their own with the unseen world, and who are striving in union with the powers of darkness to substitute a devil-begotten superstition for the revealed truths of Christianity. And though not able in all places to attack religion so openly, God's enemies are everywhere to be found in the Old as well as in the New World,

arrayed in battle against the Church, and inflamed with a truly fiendish hatred towards her. On this account the Holy Father has again and again raised his voice in warning accents, and even in the Consistory, held May 20, 1850, in expressing his joy to the assembled cardinals at his late return from Gaeta to Rome, he did not omit to remind them of the great perils with which the Church is on all sides threatened. "You know, venerable brethren," he said, "with what fury the battle is raging between light and darkness, between Christ and Belial; of what disgraceful means our enemies avail themselves, and how they are everywhere striving to destroy religion from off the earth, and to root up every germ of Christian virtue, in order to make room for their own godless and unbridled freedom in thought and action. They desire especially to ensnare the minds and poison the hearts of the ignorant multitude and of unreflecting youth, through all kinds of scandalous and pernicious errors; to declare as null and void all rights, human and divine; to annihilate the See of Peter, and to overturn the Catholic Church from its very foundations." The irreligious party of our own time, like the philosophers of the eighteenth century, avail themselves chiefly of the press for the diffusion of their abominable doctrines, and send forth crowds of books, pamphlets, and periodicals filled with lies, slander, and immorality of all kinds, and which have for their object to delude the minds of the people, and to stir them up against the priesthood and the authority of the Church; and like their predecessors too, they aim at wresting entirely from the Church the education of the young. They are powerfully helped and supported in their godless designs by the secret societies, which are spread abroad everywhere, and which reckon members or patrons amongst all, even the very highest ranks. Nothing of all this, however, ought to discourage us or shake our faith. To each of us are addressed literally the warning words of the Apostle Jude: "But you, my dearly beloved, be mindful of the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ

who told you that in the last time there should come mockers, walking according to their own desires in ungodliness. These are they who separate themselves (from the communion of the Church), sensual men, having not the Spirit. But you, my beloved, building yourselves upon your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto life everlasting" (vers. 17-21).

Why then should we be fainthearted or waver in our faith? If we see in the sad and discouraging aspect of the present time the fulfilment of the Divine oracles which foretell the sufferings of the Church and the falling away of many from God, we likewise daily see the most striking and palpable fulfilment of the consoling promises of Christ, that all the powers of hell shall never be able to prevail against the Church or against the Rock on which she is built. The Rock of Peter is now more than ever, a stone of stumbling to the powers of darkness, and the object of their fiercest attacks; now more than ever do they summon all the cunning and might of hell to destroy it and bring it to naught. God, who looks down from on high and sets at naught the strivings of His enemies, at this very time has caused a new glory to be added to it, by enabling the definition to be made at the Vatican Council during its last public session (July 18, 1870) of the infallibility of the Supreme Pontiff in his office of universal teacher. This therefore has now been promulgated to the world, as a dogma of revealed faith to be accepted by all under the pain of eternal reprobation. The attacks which the Apostolic See has in these latter times had to encounter on all hands from its enemies, have thus become by God's providence, the cause of its greatest triumph. Let us then, cling ever more closely to our faith, nor shrink from professing it before the world; for "this," St. John says, "is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John v. 4).

CONSIDERATION OF THE TIME OF THE CHURCH'S
DURATION.

It would occupy us too long, were we to adduce all those evidences which the last three centuries have supplied, of the divinity of our holy religion; for in so doing we should find ourselves drawn into a lengthy comparison of the evils begotten of heresy, and the many blessings which we even now experience as springing from the Catholic faith. There is but one point, and that of special significance, upon which we will here dwell. As at the close of the first section of this book we considered the wonderful extension of the Church, and at the close of the second, the great blessings which she has been the instrument of conferring on mankind; so now, having arrived at the close of this, our last section, we will cast a backward glance on her continuous existence from the times of the apostles down to the present day; for the continuance of Christianity, like its spread, is a most evident and unmistakable miracle, a convincing proof, that God, according to His promise, ever abides with and protects His Church. For eighteen hundred years the Church of God has existed, and still continues to exist, amid the ruins of the mighty empires which she has survived. She exists still, though her only weapon may be the spiritual sword, and her only army the band of defenceless priests by whom she is led and guarded. She still exists amidst the constant turmoil and revolution of human life and thought, unchanging and unchangeable, as in the earliest times, professing the same faith, dispensing the same sacraments, and celebrating the same divine worship. She has still the same constitution, the same hierarchy: the Pope, the representative of St. Peter is at her head; beneath him the bishops, the successors of the apostles; and then her other members in their ancient order. In short, as she was founded by Christ her Divine Spouse, so she stands at the present day before our eyes, not confined to one country or to one part of the earth, but to be found everywhere throughout its surface. We see the grain of mustard seed grown up into a mighty tree, overshadowing the entire world and refreshing all nations with its fruits. Since then there is nothing lasting under the sun, and no human work which can escape the gnawing tooth of time,—how, we ask, can the unchanging existence of the Catholic Church be explained otherwise, than by admitting her to be the result of the sustaining power of God? And still more evident does this divine indwelling power in her become out s, when we consider the attacks of which she is and has been unceasingly the object.

Scarcely had the Roman Cæsars ceased from persecuting her with fire and sword, when the heresies of the fourth and fifth

centuries arose, which, fostered and protected by the great ones of the earth, sought to diminish the sacred deposit of faith intrusted to her and to defile its purity. Every artifice of the human intellect, every weapon, and every incitement, that a skilful policy could suggest, was employed by the spirit of error in order to obtain victory over the truth. The Church, nevertheless, always held fast the apostolic faith in its integrity. The heresies were proscribed; they attracted attention only for a time, and then vanished, and their deceitfulness was exposed and brought to shame by the long succession of divinely illuminated fathers and doctors, who glorified the Church by their lives and writings. Next, countless hordes of barbarians came pouring down from the North, and spread themselves over the whole of Europe. The Roman Empire collapsed under their repeated attacks; but the Church, though hard pressed, remained standing, and in the end conquered the invaders by bringing them to the knowledge and acceptance of the Catholic faith. And now again in Islam, a new and terrible foe arose, which turned its whole rage against the Church, and attempted with fire and sword to destroy every vestige of Christianity from off the earth. Kingdoms and empires crumbled to pieces before its furious onslaught; and the fierce Moslem hosts pressed more and more closely, from Asia, Africa, and Spain, upon the fabric of Western Christianity, enclosing it on all sides as in a huge net, and threatening to crush it by the mere weight of numbers. But again it was the Church that saved Europe from lapsing into barbarism. She inspired the hearts of her sons with a noble zeal for their faith, and the power of Islam was broken by a succession of glorious victories. How often again, during the Middle Ages, as well as in our own time, have princes ambitiously sought to enslave and degrade the Church, or to cause dissension and strife within her pale! But their power always is and has been broken on the rock upon which she is built; they may often oppress her for a while, but they can never bring her into subjection. The heretics of the sixteenth century attacked her fiercely, protected as they were by powerful princes, and many of the nations of Europe were separated from her fold. But she herself remained unshaken and her faith unchanged. Her doctrine did but shine forth with new lustre from the definitions of the Council of Trent; and Christian life and discipline, which had in some places fallen into decay, revived and flourished afresh and brought forth the most glorious fruits of self-sacrifice and holiness. The losses, too, which she had suffered from the Protestant apostasy were most richly repaid her by the multitude of conversions which took place among heathen nations. The last and most terrible storm which she has had to undergo has been in recent times, when

unbelief, with its attendant spirit of revolution, advanced threatening the destruction of the entire religious and social fabric. It was on the Church of God that the storm broke most furiously, but she remained unshaken. Crowns fell from the heads of princes, thrones tottered or were brought low, and kingdoms destroyed; but the Church ever came forth victorious from the conflict; her Head might be carried from his own city by foes, or driven from it by faithless subjects, but still the mighty rock on which Christ has founded His Church continued, and yet continues, to bid defiance to every storm. And if never, at any time, has the authority of the Holy Father been more fiercely attacked than in our own day,—never, on the other hand, has his voice been listened to with greater respect and submission, or his sacred person been the object of more reverence and love.

This unchanging continuance of the Church and of the Supreme Head which Christ appointed for her, notwithstanding the unceasing battle maintained against them by the spirit of the world and the powers of darkness, most clearly attests her divine origin and places her in the sharpest contrast to the many sects which have arisen outside her in the course of ages. Protestants even, cannot forbear their wonder, and express often in glowing terms their admiration, with regard to this strange privilege of hers. Take for instance, the words of the distinguished English historian, Macaulay:—"No other institution is left standing," he says, "which carries the mind back to the times when the smoke of sacrifice rose from the Pantheon, and when camelopards and tigers bounded in the Flavian amphitheatre. The proudest royal houses are but of yesterday when compared with the line of the Supreme Pontiffs. . . . The Republic of Venice came next in antiquity. But the Republic of Venice was modern when compared with the Papacy; and the Republic of Venice is gone, and the Papacy remains. The Papacy remains, not in decay, not a mere antique, but full of life and youthful vigour. The Catholic Church is still sending forth to the farthest ends of the world missionaries as zealous as those who landed in Kent with Augustin, and still confronting hostile kings with the same spirit with which she confronted Attila. The number of her children is greater than in any former age. Her acquisitions in the New World have more than compensated for what she has lost in the Old. Her spiritual ascendancy extends over the vast countries which lie between the plains of the Missouri and Cape Horn, countries which a century hence may not improbably contain a population as large as that which now inhabits Europe. The members of her Communion are certainly not fewer than a hundred and fifty millions; and it will be difficult to show that

all other Christian sects united, amount to a hundred and twenty millions. Nor do we see any sign which indicates that the term of her long dominion is approaching. She saw the commencement of all the governments and of all the ecclesiastical establishments that now exist in the world ; and we feel no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all. She was great and respected before the Saxon had set foot on Britain, before the Frank had passed the Rhine, when Grecian eloquence still flourished at Antioch, when idols were still worshipped in the temple of Mecca. And she may still exist in undiminished vigour when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's." ¹

¹ Critical and Historical Essays, contributed to the Edinburgh Review. Essay on Ranke's "History of the Popes." October 1840.

CONCLUSION.

ON THE HISTORICAL ARGUMENTS IN FAVOUR OF CHRISTIANITY.

WE have thus followed, though, as it may well be, feebly and unworthily, the history of our holy religion. From Adam to Christ, and from Christ, the Divine Founder of the Church, to the time of His present earthly representative, we have traced its beneficent action on mankind. The faith to which we belong is indeed a glorious faith; and everything combines to tell us that it can have been given us by God alone.

1. No, truly, it is not of man's invention; God Himself has taught it to us and commanded us to believe it. He revealed it to us in the Old Testament by means of holy men, and in the New by His eternal and only-begotten Son, who appeared on earth exactly as had been beforehand promised, and confirmed His Divine teaching by numberless miracles, and, above all, by His own resurrection from the dead. God has indeed spoken to us; and to despise or reject His Word is to be lost for ever.

2. Our religion, again, does not count a few centuries merely; its foundations reach back to the very beginning of the world. Its first root was planted in Paradise, for there it was that God promised to fallen man a Saviour; and the whole of the Old Testament, with all its sacrifices and ordinances, was but the foreshadowing of the New, as the New is but the fulfilling of the Old. The Old Testament proclaimed a coming Redeemer; the New proclaims a Redeemer who is come. But the religion of each is essentially the same religion; for in each, the same Redeemer is proposed as the Object of our faith.

3. But though the origin of our holy religion is coeval with that of the human race, and its history reaches backward over a period of six thousand years ; it does not, however, lose itself in the mists of ancient tradition, but lies clearly exposed to the light of day. For, from the very earliest times down to the present, there runs a connected chain of recognised facts and events consistent with one another and harmonising to a most extraordinary degree with the monuments of antiquity, the chronicles of nations, and the discoveries of science. And the evidence thus furnished is so many-sided and cogent, that those who reject it must be prepared likewise to renounce historical certainty altogether. The very generations from Adam to Christ, are counted and named, in the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke ; and past Christian history gives us the long line of pontiffs from St. Peter to his present representative. What a wonderful and glorious series is thus presented to our eyes !

4. Even the most stubborn enemies of our faith, the Jews, bear witness to its truth ; for in their sacred books they guard with the utmost care the whole history and prophecies of the Old Testament, to which we appeal in evidence of the divine origin of Christianity. And thus none are able to say, that these records have been tampered with or added to by Christians.

5. Neither can it be denied, that by nothing short of miraculous power, could Christianity have been spread over the world. The apostles, its first preachers, were taken from amongst the humblest class of society, and possessed neither eloquence nor learning. The doctrine which they taught, with its attendant mysteries of penance, humility, and mortification, was ill adapted to attract proud and sensual pagans, in whose scandalous mythology, excuse, and even justification, was to be found for every vice. The rich and noble looked with contempt upon the poor fishermen ; wits and scholars made game of them ; and the rulers of the earth, as heathen writers too testify, raged against them with fire and sword. For three hundred years persecution and martyrdom was the

Christian's lot. Nevertheless, as we have seen, the teaching of the poor fishermen prevailed, and forced itself on men's acceptance as the teaching of God. So rapidly did it spread that very shortly after the time of the apostles, St. Justin was able to say in the face of the whole world, "There is no people, neither among barbarians, Greeks, nor any other known race, among whom praise and thanksgiving are not offered to the Father and Creator of the universe in the Name of Christ Crucified." What power but that of Almighty God could have worked a miracle so extraordinary? St. Augustine says, "Should one deny the miracles worked by the apostles, there would remain this, the greatest of all miracles, namely, that without miracles the world should have believed."

6. But not only is the Church founded on miracles, her very continuance is in itself a standing miracle. Kingdoms and empires, however powerful, decay and perish with time; Christ's kingdom alone outlasts them all and increases ever more and more. If its power is diminished in one part of the world, it does but spread farther in another. Ever since its rise it has been attacked from within and without by countless enemies, terrible in their strength and implacable in their malice. The Church of Christ has neither armies nor weapons, to defend her from assault, or oppose violence to violence. Had she not been divinely protected, the might and cunning of her foes would long since have overthrown her.

7. Yet more glorious does the Christian Church appear to us when we contemplate the blessings and the benefits she has at every time poured forth upon mankind. She has softened barbarism, done away with slavery and human sacrifices, and promoted the well-being of the family and the state. She has founded countless charitable institutions for the care of the sick and the poor; she has made laws more merciful and just, has taught concord and love, and spread abroad knowledge and true enlightenment. She may indeed be well named the Tree of Life, which God has planted, in whose shadow all nations may rest peacefully, and refresh them-

selves with its fruits. No nation has ever forsaken her protecting shelter without plunging into unspeakable misery; we see how low the once so highly favoured peoples of Asia and Africa have fallen, and what the consequences have been of unchristian free thought in Europe. "If," as St. Matthew says, "the tree is to be known by its fruits" (vii. 16), then we must recognise in the Christian faith, which brings with it happiness and blessings, the best gift of God; and in unbelief, which entails only misery, the invention of the evil one.

8. And this Church, which has been founded upon miracles by God, and which is itself but one perpetual miracle,—this Church, which unceasingly pours forth the choicest blessings over the whole earth, is none other, and can be none other, than the Roman Catholic Church. It is to her alone, and to none else, that history bears testimony, as being that community of the faithful, which Christ founded for the salvation of mankind, and in which the bishops, the successors of the apostles, under the headship of the Pope the successor of St. Peter, exercise the teaching office in unbroken succession. No sect, whatever it may call itself, can be the Church of Christ; for of each of these it may be shown, that it took its rise after Christ, and owes its existence to apostasy and schism from the Church of Rome. With regard to all such we sooner or later find our Lord's words verified, when He says, "Every plant that My Heavenly Father has not planted must be rooted up" (Matt. xv. 13). They have not in themselves the elements of stability; they come into being, create more or less disturbance, and then pass away. But not so is it with the Catholic Church; thousands of years pass by, but she neither decays nor alters, for to her belongs the promise of our Lord, "On this Rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. xvi. 18).

REMARKS ON THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH SINCE THE COMING OF OUR LORD.

Early position of the Papacy.

1. As far as outward appearance is concerned, the Papacy presented in early times an exterior widely different from that which it assumed at a later period. But just emerging, as she was, from obscurity, and engaged in a hard struggle for existence, the Church with regard to outward things confined herself to what was barely necessary, and the Supreme Head of the poor and persecuted disciples of Jesus, was lost to view amid the pomp and magnificence of the Roman capital. Thus it would be a mistake to imagine St. Peter, invested with the exterior symbols of the Papal dignity, or as a temporal prince and the ruler of an extended territory. But neither would it be on this account reasonable to conclude that the popes, in emerging at a later period from the obscurity beneath which their lives had been concealed, were guilty of a culpable falling away from apostolical simplicity, or that the possession of temporal lordship was unnecessary for, or even hostile to, the fitting discharge of their spiritual office. If we attentively study the circumstances of the times, we shall, on the contrary, find contained in them the reason for the formation of the secular power of which we are speaking. So long as the world was ruled by heathen emperors, there was no fear lest these should dispute the spiritual jurisdiction of the Pope, and pretend to rights which belonged only to the Apostolic See. But these were dangers to which the Church was very frequently exposed, after kings and emperors had entered within her pale; and if her guidance and government was not to be in many ways hindered, prejudiced, and restricted, to her great injury and the scandal of the faithful, it was needful that an independent position should be created for the popes, which should place them beyond the control of any temporal power. As secular princes also, whose position obliged them to associate as such with other monarchs, the outward tokens of such dignity could not be wanting to them. The possession of a court, of palaces, of a throne and crown, was therefore the necessary consequence of their new quality; for we all know how little inclined men are to look at things simply in the light of faith, and how powerfully they are influenced by an external show of power and dignity.

But not towards the world only,—in the Church too, after a very early period, the relations of the Pope towards the bishops became partially altered. The fact, that all the apostles possessed the gift of infallibility—inasmuch that all that they taught and com-

manded was conformable to the teaching of Christ and conducive to the welfare of the faithful—this fact had necessarily a great effect in determining the exercise of the Church's supreme power. There was of course no occasion, for St. Peter to watch over the other apostles, as they stood at the heads of the different Christian communities, and to legislate, teach, and order, in virtue of his supreme office, as the popes have now to do in order to preserve oneness and uniformity in faith and discipline. But the infallibility of the apostles did not descend after their deaths upon the individual bishops their successors. It was then possessed only by all the bishops collectively, in association with their common head, the Pope. A bishop thus, can only lay claim to infallibility in so far as his belief and teaching are in perfect agreement with that of the successor of St. Peter. And it is under this condition only, that infallibility belongs to the bishops, whether assembled in a general council or not. History thus shows us that in times of danger the popes have ever come forward, in their capacity of the successors of St. Peter, to maintain, and if necessary enforce, with threats of spiritual censure, ecclesiastical discipline and unity of faith. Thus at the end of the first century, Pope St. Clement raised his voice in a brief, full of apostolic wisdom and love, on the occasion of a dispute which had arisen in Corinth concerning the election of a bishop. And again, at the end of the second century, Pope Victor made use of his supreme authority to settle a difference which had been raised by the bishops of Asia Minor as to on what day it was proper to celebrate the feast of Easter. In the middle of the following century too, it was Pope Stephen who decided the question which was being agitated among the African bishops as to the validity of baptism when administered by an unbeliever. And many other similar examples might be cited from the history of the first four centuries. The exercise of this supreme jurisdiction by the popes was in nowise founded on Rome, the seat of their episcopate, being the capital of the world; but simply and entirely, on the authority delegated by Christ, to Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, for the guidance and government of the Church,—of which authority, the popes, as his successors, are the lawful heirs; and it was on account of this their inalienable right, that they met with submission and obedience, from the bishops, priests, and faithful throughout the Christian world.

2. Of late years the services rendered by the religious orders to mankind have been very widely recognised. Scorn and ridicule are no longer able to obscure or blot them out. None, except the most prejudiced, now suppose that industry and commerce are sufficient to secure the happiness of human society, or are able alone, to compensate for the beneficial influence, formerly exercised

Esteem
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orders.

by the cloister, on the manners of the people, on learning and the arts, on the cultivation of the land, the relief of the poor, and the well-being of the country generally. Even in England, where trade and industry have realised enormous wealth, a great Protestant statesman, Disraeli, was able not long since to write:—To them (the monks) it was owing that the country was then glorious, and the people proud of their country. Now, on the contrary, we see England divided into “two nations,” which are as strange to one another as if they inhabited different zones or planets. These two nations are called “Rich and Poor.” And to conciliate these two nations, we even now see a section of the Protestant Church of England endeavouring to re-engraft on English soil the once so-hateful institution of monasticism. A certain Brother Ignatius, for instance, a Protestant, has, we know, undertaken the task of founding a community after the rule of St. Benedict.

On the
decay of
learning.

3. The world's history gives no instance of a high level of knowledge once attained, being afterwards uniformly preserved. It is not therefore surprising, that scholastic theology, wearied out by its bold flight, and having reached the utmost limits of human thought, should have then begun to decay, and have in many instances sunk into mere wordy dissertations and useless disputes. This degeneracy however, was far from being universal; and there were never wanting men of solid learning by whom it was deeply lamented and who strove to the utmost to introduce a better method of teaching. Amongst these in Germany, we find Nicholas of Cusa, Cardinal-Archbishop of Brixen (died 1464); in France, John Gerson, Chancellor of the University of Paris (died 1429); in Italy, Æneas Sylvius (died 1464), who succeeded to the Chair of Peter in 1458 under the name of Pius II., and who was one of the most learned among the popes. Nor was this age unfruitful in men who by their preaching and spiritual writings, promoted Christian instruction and enlivened the piety of all classes. Not to speak of men of other nations, we may here name the great John Tauler (died 1361), the incomparable Thomas à Kempis (died 1471), and the famous preacher of Strasburg, Geiler von Kaisersberg (died 1510). Exegetical studies also found zealous prosecutors. This is proved by the many Biblical works of the period, notably by the learned commentary upon the whole of the Scriptures, by Nicholas of Syra (who died in Paris in 1340), and which displays a rare knowledge of Hebrew; and also by the still more voluminous one of the Bishop of Avila, Alphonsus Testatus (died 1455), a work of stupendous learning, in twenty-four folio volumes, which procured for its author the epitaph, “Hic stupor est mundi.” The “*Complutenser Bibel Polyglotte*” edited at

immense expense by Cardinal Ximenes, also deserves special mention here. Setting aside human learning, of which we shall speak further on, a zeal for the study of science was in nowise extinct; to this the fact bears witness, that, during the two centuries which preceded the so-called Reformation, more than fifty universities were founded, and before the year 1517, Europe counted in all sixty-six, of which sixteen belonged to Germany. And yet Luther, in writing of that age, was not ashamed to say that, "There was not a doctor in all the world who himself knew the whole Catechism, that is to say, the Our Father, the Ten Commandments, and the Creed; much less who could understand and teach it, as it is now, thank God, taught to even young children. For this I call all their books to witness, both of theologians and canonists; if one bit of Catechism can be really learnt out of them, I will let myself be broken on the wheel." And even still in our own day, the Middle Ages are thus often impudently held up to scorn, in order to exalt, by force of contrast, the achievements of the so-called Reformation. It cannot, however, be denied that the study of mediæval art and learning, has already done much to remove prejudices with regard to the Catholic Church. "The meaningless outcry over the darkness of the Middle Ages," says Sebastian Brunner in his book on the "Artists of the Cloister," "has now become the Shibboleth of only a few insignificant scribblers of all sects, who, being themselves stuffed but with malicious phrases and catchwords, have consequently nothing else to set before their readers."

4. The reproach has been made against the Middle Ages of intolerance and spiritual tyranny. They are accused of having suffered no teaching contrary to the faith of the Church, and of having thus imposed humiliating fetters on the freedom of human thought. This complaint is as unjust as it is unreasonable. During the Middle Ages it was well understood that the domain of thought lay beyond the compass of human jurisdiction. No heretic was ever judged or sentenced on account of his thoughts merely, since for these he was answerable to God alone. But that heresy should be published and spread abroad to the delusion of the weak and ignorant, this was, on the contrary, and with the fullest justice, sternly forbidden and as sternly punished. The Middle Ages, as was fitting, regarded the Christian religion as a treasure beyond price, the supreme good upon which all temporal and eternal happiness depended; and to guard this treasure and to protect their subjects from any encroachment upon it, was looked upon by rulers as one of their highest duties. Thus Pope Honorius III. wrote to King Louis of France: "Whilst earthly powers and governors prosecute robbers and thieves, wilt not thou,

On Mediæval
Intolerance.

who occupiest the throne of the kingdom, cleanse thy land of heretics who rob and carry off souls far more precious than any earthly goods?" Again, the political constitution of the Middle Ages was founded upon Christianity; from it all law and authority derived their force and virtue; and thus a man who laid his sacrilegious hand upon Christianity became guilty of an offence against public order, and the sentence of death pronounced in such a case was neither more nor less just than the similar sentence pronounced by the law of our own day upon the crime of high treason. And the only Christianity which the Middle Ages knew, was that which had arisen with the Church which Christ had founded, and which was living and energising within her, and leading men to salvation through the means of grace intrusted to her. Christianity and the Catholic Church, were then synonymous, and invested with an equal sanctity; and rebellion against the Church and falsification or ridicule of her teaching, was held identical with rebellion against Christianity, and falsification or ridicule of the teaching of Christ. This most especially must be carefully borne in mind, in the consideration of the severe punishments inflicted upon heretics during those ages. By the Church herself, indeed, capital punishment was never visited upon heresy; and when the ecclesiastical tribunal had found any one guilty of this crime, and delivered him in consequence to the secular arm, it was always with a request that his life might be spared; but heresy, according to the political constitution of the times, was a crime similar to high treason, since, on account of the close union between Church and State, the latter saw itself endangered by any attack directed against the former. And the spirit as well as the history of most heresies plainly testify that this fear was not ill-founded.¹

Persecution
of the Jews.

5. To lay to the charge of the Catholic Church those persecutions of the Jews which in many countries took place during the Middle Ages, shows either gross ignorance or a malicious love of calumny; nay more,—it is undeniable that the Catholic clergy, and especially the popes, constituted themselves at all times the protectors of the Jews during these persecutions; and this fact met with a striking public recognition on the part of the Jews themselves, on the occasion of a solemn synod of Rabbins assembled by the Emperor Napoleon at the beginning of the present century. There, in a speech made by one of the Jewish delegates, Isaac Samuel Avigdor, many instances were brought forward from history showing the truth of this statement. "In the middle of the seventh century," he said, "Gregory the Great took the Jews throughout the whole of Christendom under his protection, and

¹ See Alzog, *Kirchengeschichte*, sect. 237.

defended them from their enemies. In the tenth century the Spanish bishops opposed, with the utmost firmness, the desire of the populace that they should all be put to the sword, and their conduct in this matter received the marked approbation of Pope Alexander II. In the eleventh century the Bishops of Uzés and Clermont powerfully protected the Jews, who were very numerous in both these dioceses. St. Bernard shielded them in the twelfth century from the fury of the Crusaders, and in like manner also they were protected by Popes Innocent II. and Alexander III. In the thirteenth century Gregory IX. saved them from the great destruction which threatened them in England, Spain, and France, and also forbade, under pain of excommunication, that force should be put upon their consciences or their feasts disturbed. Clement V. did more. He not only protected them, but provided them with facilities for education; and at a time when the whole of Europe was persecuting them, Clement VI. granted them a refuge in Avignon. Towards the middle of the thirteenth century the bishops of Spire interfered to prevent the debtors of Jews, under the pretext of usury with which the latter were so often charged, from forcibly freeing themselves from their obligations. In the succeeding century Nicholas II. wrote to the Spanish Inquisition to prevent it from forcing upon Jews the acceptance of Christianity; and Clement XIII. endeavoured to console those Jewish fathers who bewailed the fate of their children so often torn from their mothers' arms. An immense number of such works of charity could be adduced which have been exercised at different times by ecclesiastics, who understood their duties as men and Christians, in favour of the race of Israel." Having then gone on to lament that his people should have no means of showing their sense of such great benefits, Avigdor invited the Assembly to make use of the present occasion to solemnly express their gratitude; and it not only signified its approbation of the speaker's proposal, but recorded the following declaration in the Official Report of the Session of February 5, 1807:—"We, the delegates from the kingdoms of France and of Italy, to the Jewish Synod convoked on March 30, 1806, filled with gratitude for the benefits received by the Jews in former times and in different countries of Europe from the Christian clergy,—and also thankfully recognising the protection afforded them at various times and in various places by the popes and other ecclesiastics, when barbarism leagued with prejudice and ignorance persecuted them and would have driven them forth from human society, determine that this expression of their sentiments shall be drawn up and entered in the register of this day's proceedings, to serve as a lasting testimony of the gratitude with which the Israelites of this Assembly regard the benefits received

by their forefathers from the clergy of the various countries of Europe; and they further ordain that a copy of this document shall be forwarded to His Excellency the Minister of Public Worship." (See "*Procès-Verbal des Séances de l'Assemblée des Députés Professant la Religion Juive*," p. 169, quoted by Crétineau-Joly in "*La Révolution en Face de l'Eglise*," tome i. p. 259, &c.)

Confidence placed in the prayers of the monks.

6. Besides the material benefits which all are ready to recognise as having been conferred by the monasteries, there was yet another, which deserves special mention, because, though our pious forefathers well knew how to prize it, it is overlooked in the present unbelieving age. We speak of the blessing of God drawn down upon men and nations by the prayers of the pious inhabitants of the cloister. During the times of mediæval Christianity, all men were of opinion that private and public welfare were alike dependent on Divine grace and favour, and a religious house was regarded as a ladder reaching up to heaven by means of which men's prayers ascended before God and His blessings were brought down upon the earth. And thus those orders which were devoted entirely to contemplation were regarded as being in the highest degree serviceable to their fellowmen, and popes, emperors, and kings, were accustomed to recommend themselves to their prayers. The following instance, which we will here give, shows the confidence that men were wont to place in the grateful prayers of holy men who had consecrated themselves to God. Count Ranulph of Chester was once overtaken by a great storm at sea. He asked the sailors what time it was, and on their answering that it was ten o'clock, he encouraged them to work manfully till midnight, at which hour he desired that they would come and awaken him. At midnight, accordingly, the captain came to him with the sorrowful news he had best recommend his soul to God, for the sailors were wearied out, and the danger was increasing every instant. The Count, however, rising, himself took the helm, and before long the storm subsided. "Why," the captain then asked, "did you not begin to help us till midnight, since you were able to do more than all of us?" "At midnight," the Count replied, "in the religious houses which I and my forefathers have founded, the monks rise to pray, and I trusted that through their intercession, God would then give me the needful strength." (Hurter, *Innocent III.*, vol. iii. p. 451.)

Release of subjects from allegiance.

7. However our own age may be disposed to judge of the release of subjects from their oaths of allegiance, the character of Pope Gregory VII., his deep fear of God, and unconquerable love of justice, as well as his own dying words, "I have loved justice and hated iniquity, therefore do I die in banishment," are sufficient to prove that he could not possibly have acted except in accordance

with rights that were acknowledged to be his. That of which we are speaking had been recognised both by the oppressed inhabitants of Saxony, when they appealed to him to give them a worthy ruler, and again by the Princes of the Empire, when they declared to King Henry, that, unless he was absolved from excommunication within a year, his crown would be considered forfeited. And it is, moreover certain, that both the Emperor and Henry IV. himself, acknowledged the Pope's right of deposing sovereigns from their thrones in the event of their falling into heresy. In such a case whoever did not seek within the time allowed, to be absolved from excommunication, passed for a contemner of the Catholic Church, and so for a heretic or for one suspected of heresy. On this last ground alone, it is clear that the conduct of Pope Gregory must be judged by a different standard than that of our own times. "According to the theory of the Middle Ages," says Ritter (*Kirchengeschichte*, vol. i. p. 517, fifth edition), "sovereigns held kingdoms merely as fiefs from God, the forfeiture of which was necessarily incurred by high treason, that is to say, by rebellion against God or against His Church. And the right of pronouncing judgment in such cases fell to the Pope, as the Vicar of Christ and God's representative upon earth. Thus the dispensation of subjects from their oaths of allegiance was a natural consequence of excommunication. And it is from this point of view that the attitude of the Popes towards the temporal princes of those times must be regarded."

8. Since the time when the Church was freed from bondage by the strong hand of Gregory VII., her inherent vitality and her beneficent action on all degrees of men, developed themselves with continually increasing vigour. The Pope was, in the truest sense, the Head of Christendom; he was the recognised arbitrator in all differences, and his office it was to mediate between princes and their subjects. He was the soul of all great enterprises, and of whatever of noble and glorious the age brought forth. This was strikingly the case during the reign of Innocent III., a pontiff whose strength of will was equalled by the unblemished purity of his life, by whom the Apostolic See was raised to its highest pinnacle of power, and who exercised over high and low with unimpaired authority, the office of Head of the Church throughout the Christian world. In case any should be inclined to consider this power a subject of reproach to the Papacy, we quote the words of the trustworthy and candid historian Hurter, then a Protestant, in which he describes the veneration in which the Papal dignity was held. "Everywhere the triple crown was exalted above all other crowns, and the Church's banner above all other banners; for they were the Crown and the Banner of Christ Crucified. It

Power of the
Popes in the
Middle Ages.

was to Him that each act of homage, respect, and obedience was in reality paid. In His Name commands were issued, and for His sake they were obeyed; for contempt of the visible Head was equal to contempt of the invisible. This it was that subdued the powerful, and set bounds to the exercise of tyranny, that gave right a guardian, and furnished a security for justice. The Apostolic See exercised an authority, hallowed by the majesty of religion and the power of faith, over kings for the well-being of their subjects, and over subjects for the security of their kings;—an authority more mild and beneficial than that which at the present day is delegated by kings to their soldiers, and the exercise of which frequently causes rebellion, or at best disloyalty and discontent;—that public security and order which is now so arbitrarily and laboriously maintained by a system of police, was in former times watched over by the popes, who regarded themselves as those whose duty it was to protect the rights of all. ‘Since the Apostolic See,’ writes King Leo of Armenia to Pope Innocent, ‘assists all who have recourse to it, whatever their necessities, all therefore who are suffering injustice and oppression seek for help thence, as from the protector of right and equity, and the source of all consolation, which gives milk to babes and strong meat to men, and deals justice to the oppressed according to their needs.’” It was only their own unshaken faith in their having been invested by God with the highest office in His Church, and of their consequent heavy responsibility to Him, that could have enabled the popes of those times to act towards kings and emperors with that severity and unhesitating boldness, which is so surprising to our own age, from its having lost the conception of an authority purely spiritual. But nevertheless, it has not at any time been either believed or affirmed, that the temporal power was a material outcome of the spiritual, or that the popes possessed seigniorial rights over all crowns and sceptres; but merely that they claimed a certain ephorality or directorship, derived from a conception of a universal Church, whose Head it was fitting should be invested, not, as such, with temporal power, but with ability to guide kings and nations in the path pointed out to him by God. Raised high above all earthly respects, it belonged to his office to oppose to the abuse of human power, or the infringement of law natural or divine, an authority more sacred than that of any worldly tribunal” (vol. iii. p. 61).

The Inquisition.

9. The right and obligation of the Church to watch over purity of faith and morals, and to employ such means as will enable her to do so, does not need to be proved, for it is contained in the commission given her by Christ; and those who accuse her as the persecutor of heretics and the instigator of bloody executions are

guilty of either blind or malicious slander. "The Church," says the Lateran Council of 1179, "abhors bloody executions." She never herself decreed them, far less executed them. Such were carried out only by the civil power. If popes and councils during the Middle Ages urged severe measures against heretics, it was only after all attempts for their recovery by gentler means had failed, and when both ecclesiastical and civil order was being endangered by their machinations; for no one possesses the right under pretence of liberty of conscience to foment rebellion against the authorities in Church and State. We often find the sectaries of the Middle Ages represented as being harmless people, who only desired to live in peace according to their own consciences, and who fell victims to the persecuting rage of the Church. History, however, proves the contrary. Not only did the separatists of those days very often indeed conceal crime beneath the cloak of religion, but they disseminated principles which were calculated to undermine all ecclesiastical and civil authority. In speaking of the Inquisition, it is necessary to distinguish the ecclesiastical or Roman Inquisition, which was established by the popes, from the civil or Spanish Inquisition. Inasmuch as this latter was essentially a secular tribunal, it is a matter of indifference what judgment may be passed upon it. It was established in 1481, by Ferdinand and Isabella, for the purpose of proceeding against those Jews and Moors in Spain who had allowed themselves to be baptized for the sake of political advantages, and outwardly professed Christianity whilst clinging in secret to the Jewish or Mahometan religions. These were leagued together in a secret society, thus forming a state within a state, and were guilty of many treasonable practices. The grand inquisitor of this tribunal, and the council, which might consist either of priests or laymen, were appointed entirely at the King's pleasure. Only two years after its establishment, Pope Sixtus IV. manifested displeasure at its proceedings, and his successors sought to limit its powers and preserve them from abuse. And grave protests were made both on the part of Rome and by the Spanish clergy against the capital punishment which it inflicted, and against the confiscation of goods, by means of which whole families were plunged into misery. Many sentences of the Inquisition were annulled by the popes, and inquisitors excommunicated. (This subject is treated at length in Hefele's "*Life of Cardinal Ximenes*," and in Wetzer's "*Kirchen-Lexicon*.") It is worthy of remark, however, that the most flourishing age of Spanish literature was the age of the Inquisition, and that the greatest minds were, as a rule, to be found among its advocates. With regard to the rack, it is to be remembered that it was in that age employed by all tribunals, both in Catholic and Protestant countries, on account

of the inefficient nature of the existing laws, and its use was, moreover, less frequent with the Inquisition than with other courts. The severity of this tribunal as well as the number of its victims, among whom were included not apostates merely but other criminals, has been also maliciously exaggerated. O'Connell could openly maintain that Queen Elizabeth's persecution of the Catholics of England far exceeded in barbarity anything that had been perpetrated by the Inquisition during the whole course of its existence; and as it has been often remarked, it was owing to the Inquisition that Spain was spared those bloody religious wars which the heresies of the sixteenth century spread over so many other countries of Europe, and which caused horrors with which the executions of the Inquisition bear no comparison.

The Papacy
charged
with the
demerits of
individual
popes.

10. If during the course of centuries a few popes have occupied the chair of Peter who were no honour to their high calling, we are not called upon to justify them; the sanctity of their office does but increase their own guilt, and the Church can but deplore their having been invested with it. It must, however, be remembered, that many popes of the most excellent and blameless lives, have been unworthily slandered and vilified by their enemies. The number of really bad popes, is in truth very small; they do but form melancholy exceptions amongst the long line of venerable and holy men who have adorned the Chair of Peter; and we may most fairly challenge the fanatical opponents of the Papacy to point to another throne on earth, which has been honoured by so many of its occupants and disgraced by so few; and that amongst so many worthy successors of St. Peter some few unworthy ones should be found, and of these the crimes often much exaggerated,—that such should be the case will surprise no one who considers how strong human ambition is, and that it will often leave nothing undone to attain a high pinnacle of power, and who remembers also that it was to some foreign influence, or successful faction among the nobles, that most of the unworthy popes owed their elevation. It would be entirely foolish to conclude from the unworthiness of some of its representatives that the Papacy itself was of no value, or not of divine institution; it would be precisely the same as if we should argue that the office of high priest under the old covenant could not have been founded by God because there were some high priests who dishonoured it. Rather should we recognise in this the special protection of that Providence which watches over the Holy See, that amongst those popes whose lives were not in accordance with their faith, not one should have promulgated any teaching in the very smallest degree at variance with Catholic doctrine, and this in spite of the inclination of man to bend his beliefs to his desires, and then to seek to impress those

beliefs on others also. And again, does it not appear miraculous that the world should yield respectful submission to the commands of one whose own actions were a scandal to it? To do this it must have been firmly persuaded indeed, of the divine mission of a man whose life was in glaring contradiction to his high profession. Other kingdoms decay, when their thrones are filled by worthless kings, and why is it that the Church alone forms an exception to this rule? The answer is contained in the words, "Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

II. A consideration of the vast difference between the spirits of heathenism and Christianity, suffices to explain the fact of the former being entirely without public institutions for the relief of the poor, the sick, and the afflicted. It possessed splendid and costly buildings for assemblies, baths, and public games, but not a single public hospital. Its cold egoism is well embodied in the precept delivered by Cato the Elder, as one of the soundest economy, viz., "that people should rid themselves of all useless and worn-out implements, such as old household furniture, old horses, and old slaves." In the time of the emperors, sick slaves at Rome were transported to an island in the Tiber, which was called in mockery the island of *Æsculapius*, for they were not brought there to be cured, but simply to be out of the way. It was indeed no wonder that the heathen were astonished at the tender care which Christianity, from its very beginning, lavished on the sick and needy! Neither could it be otherwise than that so soon as persecution ceased, the spirit of Christian love and mercy should provide public institutions on a large scale for the care of the poor and suffering. At Rome St. Fabiola, a descendant of the noble house of the *Fabii*, built a large and world-famed hospital. St. John Chrysostom caused public hospitals to be erected at Constantinople, after the model of the one founded by St. Basil in *Cæsarea*, and of which we have already spoken. Such creations of Christian love rose up everywhere, there being often many of them in the same city. Constantinople counted thirty-seven hospitals and refuges, the greater number of which were in existence before the seventh century. France alone possessed twenty thousand *lazarhouses*, or houses for the care of lepers. Vainly as we should look to heathenism for the founding of such institutions, still more vainly should we expect from it the heroic virtues which were exercised within them. Not content with providing shelter for the sick and poor, Christian love would tend and serve them in person. It was a spectacle which till then had never been witnessed by the Romans, when St. Gallicanus, a Roman consul, a friend of the Emperor Constantine, and a man to whom the honours of a triumph had been awarded, washed the feet

Heathen
and Chris-
tian charity.

of the poor at Ostia, served them at table, and waited on the sick. And how many such examples does not Christianity present to us? How many thousands are there who have consecrated their whole lives in religion to the service of their neighbour, with the most complete abnegation of self! How extraordinary such deeds of charity were considered among pagans, the two following instances show:—In the island of Carpathos, the inhabitants of the city of Briconte presented a golden crown to a certain physician, as a reward for his skilful and disinterested exercise of his art, and erected a marble pillar in his honour. This pillar, which has lately been discovered, bears the following inscription:—"It has pleased the people of Briconte to ordain that public honours shall be paid on the feast of Æsculapius, to Menocritus, the son of Metrodorus of Samos; and, further, that he shall receive a golden crown, and that a marble pillar shall be erected in his honour in the temple of Neptune, bearing engraved upon it this resolution of the people of Briconte, by which they acknowledge the honour due to Menocritus, the son of Metrodorus of Samos, for the zeal and skill with which he attended the sick for twenty years, and especially for the steadfast courage of which he gave proof both to citizens and strangers, during an outbreak of pestilence; and furthermore, because, instead of enriching himself, he lived in poverty and healed many infirm citizens without taking the payment which was justly his due, and, moreover, with great toil exercised his art outside the walls of the city." A similar monument exists in Athens. The grateful citizens, desiring to give a well-merited reward to the physician Evenor, caused a panegyric to be publicly pronounced in his honour, crowned him with a wreath of green leaves, awarded the rights of citizenship to him and his descendants, and perpetuated his memory by inscribing their decree concerning him on a marble pillar, which was set up within the precincts of the Acropolis (*Civiltà Cattolica*, ser. v. vol. xi. p. 616). How many crowns and pillars would not now be required, were all the heroes and heroines of self-sacrificing charity whom the Catholic Church has brought forth, to be rewarded like these two physicians?

Moral corruption of the Protestant princes.

12. "Instead of one Pope," writes Wolfgang Menzel, "the Protestants now had a great many, for each prince was an absolute pope in his own territory." And what sort of popes were they upon whose caprice the religion of their subjects depended? The Protestant writer above quoted, whose "*Geschichte der Deutschen*" (3d edition, Stuttgart, 1837) is full of unjust and damaging accusations against the Catholic Church, does not, however, do too much honour to the patrons of the Reformation, in the following description which he gives of them (ch. 417):—He says: "The

Catholic princes alone had any regard for decency. The Protestant princes lost both fear and shame, when, owing to the religious peace of Augsburg, they found themselves transformed into little popes within their own dominions,—irresponsible dictators in both faith and morals. What desire was there that they need now leave ungratified? Philip of Hesse married two women at once; the mad fits of rage of Albert of Culmbach recalled the memory of the ancient Berserkers. The Elector Joachim II. of Brandenburg, having been once certified by the obliging Agricola, that he was sure of heaven, proceeded in great security to make himself a little paradise also upon earth. To this end he built a number of country houses, filled them with courtesans, gave riotous feasts, races, and hunting parties, allowed his followers to steal whatever they could, and at last, when the country had been exhausted by his lavish excesses, had recourse to the Jews to escape bankruptcy. The Elector Christian II. of Saxony was almost always drunk, and moreover quite a cripple from debauchery. Surrounded by wild young nobles, equerries, and court fools, their only talk obscene ribaldry, these princes strove which should surpass the others in hard drinking. And this species of rivalry now very commonly took the place of the old noble and gallant tournaments. Almost every court without exception was given over to the most brutal intoxication. Duke Frederick of Leignitz was a great drunkard, and raged so frightfully when intoxicated that his own son Henry was forced to keep him in confinement for ten years before his death. Henry himself followed his father's example, squandered all his possessions, and went begging from court to court with his companions, and was at last placed in confinement, but escaped and died in misery. Louis, the son of Christopher of Wurtemberg, was so excellent a prince that it was said of him he might have stood in the place of God, but even he was almost always drunk; and this being the case with him, we need not trouble ourselves to inquire further in this respect concerning others who were for the most part wicked or treacherous." The one Protestant prince who is spoken of with praise by this writer, is Duke Julius of Brunswick; and even concerning him he adds, that "he had such an irrepressible passion for burning witches, that a whole forest of blackened stakes was to be seen near Wolfenbüttel. Even the wife of Duke Eric the Younger was forced to fly, because Julius, probably for political reasons touching the succession, had accused her of witchcraft."

The remarks which Menzel makes also (ch. 483 of the book above quoted) with reference to this subject of witch persecution, are worthy of notice:—

"Trials for witchcraft," he says, "the cruel torturing, and whole-

sale burning of old women who were accused of secret dealings with the devil, were never so rife as in Protestant countries,—thus showing that liberty of belief had only rendered superstition more stupid and brutal.” Leuchs, also a Protestant, makes the same acknowledgment in his “*Erfindungs Lexicon*,” and he, as well as Menzel, sees in the Reformation the cause of this species of persecution. “The reason of it,” says Menzel, “was that exaggerated belief in the devil brought in by Lutheranism, and which degenerated into an actual mania. Men saw the evil one everywhere; the most accidental misfortunes, the slightest maladies, were looked upon as his work.” And again Leuchs says: “This folly sprung up first with the Reformation, which should have brought light to men’s minds, but which for some time did but increase their narrowness and gloom.” It is also most worthy of note, that Rome, which was accused of being the centre whence the night of superstition had become spread over the earth, ever remained entirely free from this delusion, which has cost the lives of so many thousands; and that those men who earnestly, and even at the risk of their own lives, first raised a protest against these persecutions were priests of the Catholic Church. These were—Cornelius Loos of Treves (died at Mayence, 1593); the Jesuit, Adam Tanner (died 1652); and particularly Frederic von Spee (died 1635), and who denounced this crime in his celebrated “*Cautio Criminalis*,” whilst both then and afterwards, Carpzow, “the lawgiver of Saxony,” (died 1666), fostered the persecution of witches in Protestant Germany.

13. It has often been sought to justify the outrageous tyranny exercised on the part of Protestants towards Catholics, by the counter accusation, that by these also, hard measures have been employed against Protestants, especially in France and the Netherlands, and in England during the reign of Queen Mary; and Protestant historians continually accuse the Catholic Church of a love of persecution, whilst the persecuted and oppressed Church, they represent as consisting of their own co-religionists. It may serve to remove false impressions if we here shortly point out the invalidity of both the defence and the accusation.

a. When Luther rejected the teaching of the Church, he set up the principle which all the Reformers who followed him have without exception adopted: that to every Christian belonged the inalienable right of searching the Bible for himself, and according to its words judging (that is to say, accepting or rejecting) each article of faith. He says, “Cursed be he who shall infringe this right but one hair’s breadth.” If then it were true, that this right belonged to all Christians, what could be more unjust than to

refuse it to Catholics alone? If a Catholic considers that the Bible teaches him that the Pope has the power to bind and loose and to guide and rule the Church, or that tradition is of authority as well as Scripture in matters of faith, by what right is he on this account to be insulted, imprisoned, or killed? How can this be justified?

b. And if, as is the case according to this principle of the Reformers, religious persecution is altogether unjust, its injustice was all the more crying in the case of its being directed against Catholics; for these were in legitimate and time-honoured possession of a faith inherited from pious ancestors—a faith, too, which even their enemies were forced to admit had flourished for many hundred years, had spread itself over all the earth, brought forth great saints, erected a new Christian world on the ruins of heathenism, and even at the time of the Reformation was professed by vast numbers of pious and virtuous Christians. Nothing could be more praiseworthy than that they should resist in every possible manner all attempts to deprive them of this faith, to which they clung as the pledge of their salvation, than that they should refuse to allow in their midst preachers who attacked and reviled it by word and writing, nor suffer that heresy should eat like a canker into their land to the everlasting hurt of themselves and their descendants. But with regard to the sects the case was a different one. These had no time-honoured rights to be defended; nay, rather, they boasted of having cast off the ancient yoke and chosen for themselves a new gospel. And when they abolished Catholic worship, persecuted priests, plundered and ruined churches, and afflicted the faithful, their acknowledged object in so doing was to rob Catholics of their greatest treasure, that faith, namely, which they themselves had disloyally forsaken, and to force them to accept their own creed in its stead; or, in other words, to impose on them a faith for the truth of which there was no guarantee whatever, which was neither founded on Christian tradition nor supported by the unanimous teaching of fathers and councils, but which these, together with Holy Scripture itself, united rather in condemning—which had for its grounds merely an ignorant and arbitrary interpretation of the Bible, and which took on itself to proclaim palpable error as divine truth,—a faith which from its very rise too had been divided against itself, the plaything of despotic princes and the promoter of discord and immorality.

The intention of imposing the new doctrines by force cannot be denied, for facts speak too clearly. “If you do not at once become Lutherans,” wrote Gustavus Vasa to the people of Helsingland, “I will have a hole made in the ice of the Deelen-See and drown you all.” This was at least, sufficiently plain speaking

And it is well known that in many places, especially in England under Queen Elizabeth, not only was the celebration of mass made a capital crime, but attendance at heretical worship was enforced under pain of fine and imprisonment.¹

In France, too, where a Catholic King reigned, those parts which lay under the power of the Huguenots were forced, by taxation, the quartering of soldiers on the inhabitants, and the pulling down and unroofing of their houses, to accept the teaching of Calvin. Bossuet says in his "*Histoire des Variations*," ch. x. sec. 52, "We still possess the original manuscripts of the orders, granted by generals and cities for this end, at the request of Protestant consistories." If they did not always act with the same violence, their intention was nevertheless everywhere equally plain, namely, to uproot the Catholic faith and forcibly to substitute Protestantism. Hardly any one could be found in our own day who would excuse such conduct by the reason which was then given for it, namely, that it was necessary that the kingdom of Antichrist should be overthrown and idolatry destroyed. Language of this kind was well calculated to inflame against the Church a populace, already impatient of her discipline and authority, and greedy of rapine; but common sense only was needed, to see in such abuse the outcome of a malevolent spirit, and to turn from it with disgust. The evil was, however, that men blinded by passion would not see. And this was why all discussions upon points of religious difference were in vain; that the replies of Catholic theologians and universities were unattended to, and the most pressing invitations to the Council of Trent scornfully rejected.

c. With regard to the bloody executions which Protestant historians, desirous of shifting blame from their own party to that of the Church, describe as having been perpetrated on the side of the Catholics, it is especially necessary to distinguish whether such

¹ For a list of the English penal laws against Catholics, of which some have even yet never been formally repealed, and which have for the most part the object of enforcing conformity to the State religion, see Deschamp's "*Die Wahrheit und Vernünftigkeit des Glaubens*," p. 399. When the Catholic King James II. published "*Declarations of Indulgence*" in England, and declared that so long as he was king none of his subjects should be punished merely for the exercise of his religion, he lost his crown. When in 1778 some of the penal laws were mitigated, a fanatical storm rose against Popery in the pulpits and the press. Protestant unions were formed in various parts of the country which, under guise of religion and humanity, breathed hatred and persecution towards their Catholic countrymen. In 1780 a mob of 50,000 rioters attacked the chapels and houses of the Catholics of London and began to tear them down and burn them. See Milner's "*Letters to a Prebendary*," pp. 313 and 327, &c.

took place by sentence of the ecclesiastical or of the civil tribunals. The Church, as we have already pointed out, abhors bloodshed, and not one drop of blood was ever spilt by command of the Roman Inquisition. Wherever the Church found heresy established by civil law, she never once allowed force to be applied to bring back heretics to the truth. She considered such in the light of children who had been led astray, and whom, though shielding the faithful from the contagion of their example, she desired to recover by conviction alone; for her hatred of error did not hinder her love for the erring. It was on such principles, too, that her servants the bishops and priests also acted. The Bernese had forcibly suppressed Catholicism in the Chablais, a province belonging to the Duke of Savoy, and when St. Francis de Sales undertook to bring it back to the bosom of the Church, he did so at the continual risk of his life. The Calvinist preachers described him as a sorcerer and a false prophet. Hired assassins lurked in his path and forced their way into his dwelling. But the saint repaid insult and persecution with patience and love. When entreated to accept the protection of a guard, he constantly declined, saying "that he would have no other weapon than the Divine Word, with which the apostles conquered the world." With regard, however, to such executions of heretics as took place by command of the civil power, the responsibility does not rest with the Church. Catholic sovereigns acted in such matters in accordance with the laws then in force, which laws she (the Church) had neither made nor confirmed. Neither was it Catholic princes only, who assumed the right of punishing heretics with death,—Protestant princes did so also. None ever exercised this right with greater severity than the English Henry VIII.,—in some cases even abjuration of heresy being insufficient to avert death. The Zwinglians in Switzerland dealt thus with the Anabaptists; the Lutherans in Germany with such as were convicted or even only suspected of Calvinism; whilst the Calvinists in Geneva, Holland, and England did so with regard to all who differed from them in faith. The first Calvinist Synod in Paris, in 1559, not only allowed this right (of capital punishment for heresy) in the confession of faith which it drew up, but declared its exercise to be a duty incumbent upon rulers. The theory and practice of Calvin and Beza with regard to it has already been spoken of; it is well known that their conduct in this respect was approved both by Melancthon and Bucer. With regard to Luther, he held that heretics should not be much disputed with, but that it behoved the civil power to step in and condemn them unheard.

Whatever we may think of the severity practised towards heretics by secular rulers, such conduct admits more easily of justi-

fication on the part of Catholic than of Protestant powers. Catholic princes in such cases were not like Protestant ones, punishing a crime of which they were themselves guilty,—of rebellion and sedition namely against the authority and faith of the universal Church. “Liberty of belief” had never been inscribed by them upon their banners; by them power was applied, not to force a new religion on others, but to prevent its encroaching on their own territory. But even setting aside all these considerations, it is ever to be borne in mind that in combating heresy they were combating also sedition and rebellion against the State. The character of the Reformation from its very rise had been revolutionary, and its tendency ever was, to promote rebellion against constituted authority; and it was impossible that the Catholic princes should look calmly on whilst their authority was being set aside and condemned, their Catholic subjects oppressed, the Church’s possessions torn from her, and the foundations laid for endless internal strife and bloodshed. If indeed some were guilty of excessive severity, but too many others erred on the side of leniency.—“*Medium tenueri beati* ;” but it is hard for men to hold exactly to the just mean in such stormy times.

Means of
Conversion
employed
by the
Catholic
Church.

14. The Church, mindful of the mission she had received from her Divine Founder, that she should preach the Gospel to all nations, no sooner heard of the discovery of a new world than she zealously took thought how she might confer upon it the treasure of the true faith, and all the blessings of our holy religion. Alexander VI., then pope, at once wrote as follows to the Spanish sovereigns, Ferdinand and Isabella, by whom Columbus had been equipped for his voyage of discovery:—“We urgently admonish you in the Lord, and call upon you by the holy baptism you have received, which binds you to obey the commands of the Apostolic See, and by the tender mercies of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you seek to lead the nations inhabiting these countries and islands to the acceptance of the Christian religion, and acknowledge it to be your duty so to do.” That the Church ever used herself, or permitted others to use, harshness and cruelty towards the heathen with a view to their conversion, is one of the most disgraceful calumnies which have ever been invented concerning her. If we refer to the decrees of the popes concerning the conversion of the Indians, we find no other means either counselled, commanded, approved, or even allowed, than instruction, charity, kindness, gentle treatment, and good example. To the letter, above quoted, of Alexander VI. to Ferdinand and Isabella is added the following injunction:—“We command you, in virtue of holy obedience, that you send to the said countries and islands, pious, learned, experienced, and well-proved men, to instruct the in-

habitants in the Catholic faith, and to lead them to a virtuous life." Leo X. again commanded the same King Ferdinand, that "the precepts of humanity should be observed towards the Indians, and gentleness and charity, which were the means adapted for this end, employed to win them to Christ; the decrees of Adrian VI., Paul III., Pius V., and Urban VIII. are all to the same purpose, and no other means were ever used by order either of Ferdinand and Isabella, Charles V.,¹ Philip II., or of the great Spanish statesman, Cardinal Ximenes. They did not delay to send pious and zealous missionaries to America, and provided for the erection everywhere of churches and of schools in which children should be gratuitously instructed; and for the building of hospitals, orphanages, and institutions for the poor and afflicted. They stringently enjoined also on the viceroys and governors whom they sent out to their new possessions, "that they should rule with justice, zealously promote the instruction of the Indians in the Christian faith, and carefully guard them from all oppression by which their conversion might be hindered or rendered more difficult, so that the Indians by this charitable treatment might the more easily recognise the great benefit which God had granted them in freeing them from idolatry." The pious Queen Isabella, when near her death, earnestly recommended this matter in her will to the care of her husband and of her daughter and son-in-law, and reminded them of the strict obligation which the Pope's letter,² above quoted, had imposed on them. And when, afterwards, fierce soldiers and greedily adventurers disregarded the royal commands, the Church continually interposed in defence of the rights of the Indians, and complained of their ill-treatment as the great hindrance to the spread of Christianity. Never at any time has she approved or allowed of conversion by means of force; on the contrary, she has always forbidden and condemned the persecution and extermination of heathen nations on the ground of their being idolaters and enemies of God.

If in former times there have been Christian rulers who held it lawful to forcibly compel the rude heathen to receive baptism, such measures never received sanction either from popes or councils. On the contrary, the Church always held that the faith was not to be forced on any one; that baptism without faith and freewill in its reception was invalid, and not only so, but that in such cases its

¹ Extracts are given in the Bollandist Life of St. Pius V. (May 5, n. 156, sqq.), from that Pope's letters to the Kings of Spain and Portugal, in which he expressly forbids the forcing of Christianity upon the Indians, and directs what means are to be employed in their conversion, and how they are to be confirmed in the faith by instruction and Christian gentleness.

² For proofs of this see the "*Civiltà Cattolica*," vol. ii. series 6.

administration was unlawful. But it would be very unjust, however, on this account to compare such Christian kings to the Russian czars and Protestant princes, who, solely in virtue of their temporal sovereignty, and in defiance of the most sacred rights, have used their power to compel their subjects to apostatise from a faith which they regarded as their only means of eternal salvation. When Charlemagne, for instance, threatened the Saxons with punishment if they would not receive Christianity, he was not either setting himself up as lord over faith and religion, or tyrannising over the rights of conscience. He knew that these savage races clung from superstition merely, and not from any reasonable ground or interior religious conviction, to idolatry; and he had, moreover, spared no pains in providing for their instruction and enlightenment, so that nothing was indeed wanting but goodwill, to accomplish their conversion. Many years' experience, besides, had taught him that to Christianise these wild tribes was the only means of civilising them, and inducing them to refrain from warlike raids, and live at peace with their neighbours; and he was fully convinced, too, that he could do them no greater kindness than by making them sharers of the graces of the Christian religion, and subjecting them to its laws.

Free-
masonry.¹

15. It is with perfect justice that the popes at different times have earnestly warned the faithful against the Society of Freemasons, and threatened with excommunication such as should join it, as was done by Clement XII. as early as the year 1738. This is admitted by a member of the society itself in an article in the "*Deutschen Vierteljahrschrift*" (part i. 1841): "We must do this justice," he says, "to the Roman hierarchy: it has recognised sooner and more clearly, the aim and scope of this society, and also its importance, and has remained truer to its own conviction with regard to it, than many members of the society itself." But because freemasonry, in order to carry on unhindered its designs against Christianity, carefully conceals its true purpose under a veil of mystery, and refuses admittance to none on account of his creed, many are, in consequence, misled into believing that it has therefore nothing to do with religion at all, but is merely a society for the promotion of social intercourse, culture, and mutual assistance. Such should note the words of the Freemason Prusson, of the Geneva Lodge, on "Perfect Equality," which occur in a work of his, published in 1856 by L. Salot: "Only the ignorant vulgar believe that freemasonry is a gay club or benevolent society; it is, on the contrary, a religion, but a religion which, as such, recognises none even of the most fundamental doctrines of Christianity; it is a religion which supersedes all

¹ For the secret statutes of Freemasonry, see "*Civiltà Cattolica*," 1864, series.

other religions. It certainly does accept God as the basis of its principles, but God as the soul of a material universe as eternal as Himself."

It is a fact, moreover, which history has shown over and over again, that freemasonry has ever striven with restless zeal to destroy Christianity. It is with great justice that the Protestant writer Guericke says in his handbook of Church history (vol. ii. p. 553): "Freemasonry has exercised an incalculable influence on the destruction of positive Christianity; it has used its hammer to the very extent of its power in shattering positive Christianity into a thousand pieces, and it desires to erect a new temple on the site of that which Christ once built, even if this new temple should be but a tower of Babel. It has ever had in view the setting aside and destruction of the teaching and writings of the Catholic Church with its order and corporate existence, its primacy, hierarchy, and priesthood, with all such doctrines, institutions, and usages as are distinctively Catholic; and will tolerate and favour only such Catholicism as shall be content to surrender its true essence and meaning, and live in friendship with deism, naturalism, or other kindred systems."

Again, it cannot be denied that in the French Revolution, whose object was, before all else, the destruction of the Christian faith, freemasonry played an important part. Count von Haugwitz, presiding minister for Prussia at the Congress of Verona in 1822, laid before the assembled princes a document pointing out the revolutionary action of the order, and moving its suppression. "Before I had reached my majority," he here says, "I had already attained to a high grade in the order, and was appointed to preside over a part of the Prussian, Polish, and Russian lodges. I have acquired the firmest conviction that not only had the French Revolution and the king's murder, with their attendant horrors, been resolved on in the lodges, but the way prepared for them beforehand by secret oaths and confederations." In this opinion Niebuhr also concurs, appealing to the judgment of Portalis, himself a freemason, that "freemasonry prepared the way for the French Revolution and exercised a decided influence on its progress" (*Histor. Polit. Blätter*, vol. xxix. p. 428). A glance at its present action in Italy, Belgium, and Portugal must be sufficient to convince the world of the hostile tendency of freemasonry to the Church. That in German freemasonry this tendency is specially developed, is shown in Bishop von Ketteler's admirable work, "Can a Believing Christian be a Freemason?" Though differences of opinion may exist within the order as to the means most proper for forwarding the end it has in view,—though in some countries its action may be rash and violent, in others slower and more cautious—yet its object is the same in all, the

establishment in religion, namely, of a crude rationalism by the rejection of all dogmatic truth, consequently the overthrow of all positive Christianity, and especially of the Catholic Church; and in politics, of a fully-developed democracy, recognising no higher power than the people, and no authority but what emanates from them; and, consequently, the overthrow of thrones, and crection of one universal republic, whose supreme law shall be Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity.

Abundant proof for what we have said has been lately furnished from the writings of French, English, German, and Italian Freemasons, in a series of striking discussions which have appeared in the "*Civiltà Cattolica*" from 1864 to the latter half of 1870. It cannot, however, be denied that many good men, and even many Catholics, are to be found in the order, who, without knowing or desiring it, lend their name, position, and wealth, to forward the above ends; and this because they are alike ignorant of the real object of the society, and of the Church's prohibition and condemnation concerning it. And this is not surprising, because, as is well known, the members of the order are not immediately on their reception into it initiated into its mysteries; and it is, besides, in accordance with its principles, to feign, where prudence demands it, toleration towards all religions, and respect for the law of the State.

THE END.





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